CATECHISM THEOLOGY

J. B. McLAUGHLIN

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CATECHISM THEOLOGY

BY

J. B. McLAUGHLIN, O.S.B.

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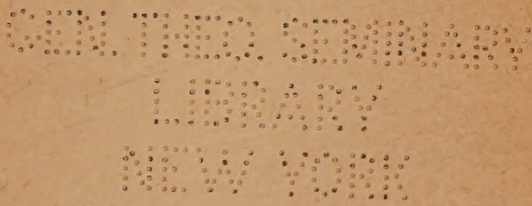

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PREFACE

In this book I have tried to put on paper instructions given during many years to school children and to converts of elementary education. When the truths of religion are put before them in their own language they have no difficulty in understanding them; and their minds are then more or less ready to take in the technical phrases in which the Catechism sums up these truths. I have written primarily for teachers, to give them full explanations of doctrine in language that children can understand; especially for those teachers who hold it best to let pupils first understand the thing spoken of, and then learn terms and formulæ to describe it, rather than begin with studying terms as a means to understanding the thing. Here, the thing spoken of is religion; and religion should stir the heart as well as the mind. If we approach it through known language, it stirs the heart at once and wakes the interest which wants to understand the Catechism terms. Whereas, if we approach it through unknown terms, all the study of these has to be done before anything is glimpsed that could move the heart.

I hope that the book may also be found suitable as a class-book for students of twelve years and upwards ; and for the instruction of converts in the all-important part of the ground which this volume covers. What part of the ground that is may be explained broadly thus : if we think on the one hand of the spiritual universe into which the soul enters, and on the other hand of the soul's doings in that universe, this book deals with the spiritual universe ; the soul's doings are left over for separate treatment.

I am deeply indebted to the editor of the *Sower*, not only for his labours in securing the republication of these papers in book form, but also for much advice and encouragement, without which the work would never have taken shape.

J. B. McLaughlin, O.S.B.

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CATECHISM THEOLOGY

CHAPTER I

DE DEO UNO

I. The Supreme Spirit

A spirit is a mind.—The wrong way to think about a spirit is to think of ghosts appearing. People imagine a 'ghostly' form, in shape like our bodies, but invisible unless it 'appears' to someone; they think this is the soul; that it is sometimes seen leaving the body at death, sometimes appears as a ghost after death; and perhaps sometimes in life leaves the body in a trance and 'appears' somewhere else.

The right way is to think about the one spirit that we can really know—our own mind. Many people never think about their own minds at all, though they are thinking *with* them all day long. The mind is a spirit, and can think about itself. Think what you do in your mind: you know and you will. You understand things and you remember them. You will, loving this and hating

that, choosing this and refusing that. The things you think about are mostly not visible material things. In the first book I open and the first sentence I look at, I find 'health, thoughtful disposition, pleasant manners, mastery, language, achievement, holiness, life, ministry, goodwill, zeal, efficiency, poverty.' Not one of these is a material thing that can be weighed or measured or that takes up room on the earth. They are thoughts or spiritual ideas about material things. And the mind that thinks them is a spirit.

Now when we watch our mind at work on these things, desiring health, honouring holiness and poverty, understanding goodwill and efficiency, we soon feel that the mind itself is spiritual like its thoughts ; not a thing of any shape or size or weight. We do not ask how big is your will, how heavy your memory ; but rather how clear is your understanding, how strong your will, how sure your memory.

When we are thus thinking of our soul as it is, a mind, and watching how it remembers, understands, wills, if anyone says, 'I think of your mind as a pale, misty, floating thing, shaped like your body,' we see at once that he is not thinking of a mind at all, but of something bodily. Or if he says, 'Your mind is your brain,' he is not thinking of the mind, but of the body. And if ever a spirit appears in a bodily form, it is not showing

its own shape, for it has none ; but it makes the appearance of a body where no body is.

A spirit, therefore, is a mind ; whether joined to a body as ours are now, or without a body, like the angels and the souls of the dead.

God.—God is a Spirit, a Mind. A Mind that sees us and knows us through and through. That knows all things everywhere ; not by passing from place to place quickly, but by being in all places always. That knows all times ; not by remembering the past and foreseeing the future, but by being always present to all times that were or are or will be. A Mind of endless power, that makes all creatures by merely willing. A Mind that loves us one by one with infinite love.

All-knowing.—None of us, nor anything that is, can get away from Him : from His knowledge that sees us ; His power that gives us each moment our being and strength and growth ; His will that shows what we should do ; His love that rejoices in our doing right and in our being happy. This gives us the feeling of being always watched. It will harm us if we take it wrongly—like prisoners always under a sentinel's eye. The right way is to take it lovingly. We sometimes see little children who are only happy when their mother is with them. Our happiest moments is this life are when our mind opens to God's Mind like a flower to the sun, and we rest under His gaze.

Supreme Creator.—God is supreme, highest. It is plain that whatever glorious stars or angels He may make are less than Himself. For they are only things that He has made ; while He is their Maker, who need not have made them, need not keep them in being, and could make others far more glorious than they. So that all He has made or could make, all are as nothing before Him ; He is infinitely above all, and must always be supreme, though He should make spirits more glorious far than He has yet made.

His two worlds, seen and unseen.—If God had made no spirits, neither men nor angels, but only the material world, would it have been worth making ? It is very wonderful and very beautiful, with its stars and its flowers ; but, after all, everything in it is simply doing what it must—what God makes it do, pushed on blindly by a law that it knows nothing of. We cannot see any reason why God should have made these things—like beautiful toys—and use His supreme power to make them move, if there were no one but Himself to see them. But He has made spirits, us and the angels, who are able to know Him and His works, to love Him, to choose whether they will obey Him or not. And when one soul says to Him, 'I know Your greatness and holiness, I see that all ought to obey You, and I choose to serve You because You are God ; I am glad that You

have not forced me to serve, but have let me make a free offering of my service,' that free service of one soul is a better thing than all the forced obedience of all the suns and stars.

So God most shows His supreme power, not in making the lower things which must obey Him, but in making spirits with free-will. They are free to serve or not to serve. If they serve Him at all, it is by free-will service, the highest glory and love that any creature can offer Him. If they will not serve they ruin themselves. But He has set limits to the mischief they can do by defying Him. When we kindle fires for our use, we try to arrange beforehand limits beyond which they shall not spread in case of accident. God sets limits to the wrongdoing of free wills. He allows them to do evils which He will afterwards turn to greater good ; but no other evil. How He will do this we cannot yet see, and it is foolish to sadden ourselves by trying to see and failing.

Some men do not believe that they have free-will, though they are using it all day, as they use their speech. To them the world seems as meaningless as we also think it would be if God had made only the lower things and left out souls and spirits, whose free love and service is the crown and the meaning of all creation.

Self-existing.—The Catechism says that God alone exists of Himself. Everything else gets its

being from God. A man, a house, the world : we can think back to the time when this man was not ; nor this house ; nor this world. They had no being. Then where did they get their being ? In the end it was from God. He made the things of which they are made, and the forces which shaped them ; He gave them their being, and gives them their being each moment.

And God Himself, where did He get His being ? He did not get it. He has it of Himself: He always was and always *must* be. He is the source of our existence, we exist by His Will and creation. There is no *need* for us to exist at all. But God exists of necessity : the One who *must* be. He, and He alone, exists of Himself.

II. Infinite in all Perfections

We cannot lift our minds often to God without wondering what He is like. And the answer given us is, that He has all good qualities, all perfections ; and He has each of them endlessly, He is infinite in all of them. A king is mighty and can do many things ; but God is Almighty and can do all things, there is no end to His power. Nor to His knowledge. An angel may know much ; but God knows all things, He is All-knowing. A craftsman can make some things if he has the stuff to make them from ;

but God can make all things, and out of nothing. He is the Creator.

So with all the qualities that are great or good or beautiful in any creature : God has them all, infinitely. They are in the creature only because they were first in God. He who is All-great, All-good, All-beautiful, makes the creature to resemble Him by being great in some way, or in some way good or beautiful. Our life is a great and beautiful gift ; and the life of the creatures around us, and of the angels. But we each are made to live just one kind of life, a man's life, a bird's life, or a plant's. But God is not limited to one kind of life, nor to many. He is Life, the one, true, and living God.

Some of our perfections are only signs of our weakness (as the best of glasses are a sign of weak sight). Swiftness in passing from place to place like an eagle is a great thing for us who can only be in one place at a time. God, who is not limited to one place at a time, has a better thing than swiftness. He is everywhere, always. So also our minds can remember what is past, and can reason out what is likely to happen in the time to come. This is useful to us, because we can only be in one moment at once. God is in all our times at once, and so has no need to remember or to reason ; He sees everything.

God cannot be imperfect.—God is the very truth.

Men may be truthful, and angels ; but God is Truth itself. He cannot deceive nor be deceived. Cannot ? Why then does the Catechism say later that He can do all things ? He can do all things that need power, but not things that need weakness ; all things that need goodness and love, but not things that need wickedness and ill-will ; all things that need knowledge and wisdom, but not things that need ignorance and folly. To be deceived needs ignorance ; to deceive needs wickedness ; and God has not these imperfections. He has all perfections, infinitely. To say that He is infinite in them is to say that He cannot be wanting in them at all; He cannot be imperfect in any way, and therefore cannot fall into any of those acts that come from weakness or imperfection. When a respected man falls, people sometimes say, I did not think that he *could* have acted so meanly. Why ? You thought there was so much nobility in him that he simply could not be mean. That is the way to think of God ; there is such perfection in Him that no shadow of sin, or folly, or suffering, or even change, can be thought of Him. When people ask could God do absurd things, make truth untrue, make a thing that has happened not have happened, love sin, they are asking could God be imperfect, could He make Himself not God. 'He cannot deny Himself,' St. John tells us.

A little child, who thinks of our God at Bethlehem, knows His love and His innocence. But he does not know how great is this God who loves him. And, until we think of His greatness, we do not enough value His love. In our prayer it is good to spend time thinking of His greatness : Almighty, giving being to us and all creatures and ruling all without effort : All-present and All-knowing, from whom nothing is hid : Eternal, before the world was made or the angels, living His own life, compared to which all created life is as a few grains of sand. These thoughts open our eyes to His majesty and to the wonder of His stooping to us. David said, 'I am reduced to nothing before Thee, and I had not known it.'

We worship God for His perfections.—But the Catechism warns us that we cannot worship Him unless we think of His other perfections. Faith, Hope, Charity, Contrition : we can do these duties only because of what God is ; and if we do not think what He is, we cannot do them.

By Faith.—Will you believe all these mysteries —Heaven, Hell, the Blessed Trinity, the Incarnation ? They might be true ; but *are* they ? What is it that puts a man's mind at rest and makes him say, Certainly I will believe ; I am bound to ? It is the thought that God is Truth. God knows, and He cannot be mistaken. God tells

me as much as He thinks fit; He cannot deceive. I am being told by God, and I was hesitating to believe. It is shameful; 'My God, I believe; for Thou art Truth itself.'

By Hope.—How can we hope? Hope to live a good life and to reach heaven? We think of His infinite Power; no matter how weak and stained we be, He can nurse us back to strength and sinlessness. Yes, but will He? We think of His infinite Goodness, which loves us and loves to see goodness in us. But His Goodness would be no less if He now cast us aside, who have so often cast aside Him and goodness! That is true; but we think of His infinite Faithfulness. It is He that calls us now to new hope, and promises to help us. To hesitate would be to doubt His Faithfulness, His Power, His Goodness.

By Charity.—In the Goodness of God there are two things to think of: His Holiness and His Kindness. In Himself He is infinitely good; and this His goodness or Holiness is infinitely beautiful, infinitely lovely. This is what chiefly draws us to love Him, and to hate our sins. Even in this world we love some people simply for the goodness and beauty of their character, people who perhaps do not know us at all, or are justly offended with us. Much more does the Holiness of God draw our love. Again, we love others for having been good to us. To us God has

been infinitely good ; and this also moves us to love Him and to sorrow for sin. Most we feel His goodness to us in this : that He, who so loves holiness, also loves me who am not holy, and longs to see me become holy. There is our vocation, the call He makes to us : You, who see how lovely is His Holiness, strive to be like Him that you may be lovely as He is ; that He who now loves you with pity may then love you with infinite delight. Be ye holy because I am Holy. Be ye also perfect, as your Heavenly Father is Perfect, that you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven. That you may be made partakers of the Divine nature. God made our nature to His own image and likeness, giving us free-will after the likeness of His own free Will. Our work in life is to make our souls into His image and likeness.

All His perfections are one.—Though our minds have to think of God's perfections each separately, yet in Him they are all one. God is Power, Knowledge, Life; God is Beauty, Wisdom, Joy ; God is Truth, Holiness, Justice ; God is Love, Mercy, Goodness. All these one and the same Spirit is. He has given us a picture of this in the sun's rays ; which are light and heat, food for the leaf and beauty for the flower, health for the body and joy for the mind, all at once. Since all His perfections are one, it is only our

feeble understanding that divides them and makes some people sadden themselves, wondering how His justice can stand with His mercy, or His goodness with His power. All these in Him are one. We must not expect to judge His acts, we who never fully understand another man's doings, and seldom our own.

Suggestions for Further Reading

Bellord's *Meditations on Christian Dogma*, Vol. I (Catholic Truth Society), deal with the Godhead and the Trinity.

CHAPTER II

DE DEO TRINO

Three Persons.—When we are thinking of God in the eternity before the world was made, a feeling comes on us of His great loneliness. But there was no loneliness ; for He has let us know that God is not one Person, but three. Our Lord said to His apostles, ' You shall be scattered, every man unto his own, and Me you shall leave alone: and *I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.*' And He prayed, ' And now glorify Thou Me, O Father, with Thyself, with *the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.*'

God the Son is not the Father ; He is someone else. And the Holy Ghost is not the Father nor the Son ; He is someone else, a third Person. In the words just quoted, Our Lord is plainly talking about Himself and His Father as two different Persons. He says, again, that He does not do His own will, but someone else's—His Father's. His doctrine is not His own, but someone else's—His Father's. So about the Holy Ghost : ' If I go not, He will not come ; if I go, I will send Him to you.' ' I will ask the Father,

and He will give you another Paraclete, the Spirit of truth.' Clearly the Holy Ghost is a Person, a different Person from the Father and from the Son.

Of these three Persons, the Father is first, the Son second, the Holy Ghost third. Our Lord says that He came from the Father, the Father sent Him. And of the Holy Ghost He says once that 'the Father will send Him in My name,' and another time, 'I will send Him from the Father'; so that we must think of the Son as proceeding from the Father; the Holy Ghost as proceeding from the Father and the Son.

One Spirit.—It is easy thus to think of the three Divine Persons distinct from each other; and it is easy to forget that they are one Spirit. Three different Persons having only one Mind between them; it is not easy to think of. There is only one Supreme Spirit: The Father is that Spirit: The Son is that Spirit: The Holy Ghost is that Spirit. God made the world. The Father made it, the Son made it, the Holy Ghost made it, yet it was made only once. All that the Catechism says of God is said of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost alike; for each of them is the one God of whom these things are said.

All equal.—Then, since they are all the one God, we must not think that the First Person is

greater or the Third Person less. They are all equal. Our Lord said we are to be baptized 'in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost'—three Persons, yet in one name (not names), for they are one God. He said, 'The Father and I are one'—one Spirit, one God. So there must be another reason why One is First and One is third. This also He has shown us dimly.

One proceeds from another.—The Son receives His being from the Father; the Holy Ghost receives His being from the Father and the Son. But not as we receive our being. The Father gives me *my* being, a created being. But He gives *His own* being to the Son and to the Holy Ghost—the eternal being of the Creator. 'All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine,' said Our Lord. And again, 'The Holy Ghost shall receive of Mine.' And another difference: God gives me being because He wills and when He wills. But the Son and the Holy Ghost receive the Father's being from all eternity, by the very nature of God. Not because the Father wills it, but because He Is. The Blessed Trinity *must* be, as God must be; for God is the Blessed Trinity. In the Scripture Our Lord is called the only-begotten Son of the Father: 'I have begotten Thee before the morning-star,' that is, from all eternity.

This is made a little clearer to us by thinking

of the likeness that is in our souls to the Blessed Trinity. Not the likeness mentioned in the Catechism, of our three powers by which one person seems to be always doing three persons' work—remembering the past, understanding our present thoughts, and willing the things we mean to do. But there is another likeness, shown us in the Scriptures where Our Lord is called the Word.

The Mind, the Word, the Love.—Think what happens in our minds when we are eager to do some thing. First we get the idea. We think, and gradually see what might be done, till the idea is clear in the mind. Then we begin to like it, to be eager about it, till people say we are in love with it. Look at those three things : the mind, then the thought or idea that is born in the mind, then the love for that thought. The mind gave birth to the thought ; from the mind and its thought proceeds the love. That is the closest picture of the Blessed Trinity that God has shown us. The Eternal Mind gives birth to the Word (or thought) : from the Mind and the Word proceeds Love. Our mind, in this picture, corresponds to God the Father ; our thought to God the Son ; our love to God the Holy Ghost. This explains why sometimes the Son is called the Wisdom of God, and the Holy Ghost the Love.

This also helps us to take the words 'proceeds,' 'came from,' in the right sense. Our

thought and our love proceed from the mind, come from the mind; but this does not mean that they proceed *from the mind to somewhere else.* It means that they come into being *in* the mind itself and stay there; the mind gives them being in itself. So 'I came forth from the Father,' 'The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father'—not to somewhere else—but they eternally come into being in the Father. 'I am in the Father, and the Father in Me.'

Notice this difference. Our thought and our love are passing things that soon leave our minds. But the Word of God is a Person, and the Love of God is a Person; and both are eternal. St. John does not say 'The Thought was with God,' but 'The Word was with God, and the Word was God.' But Word means thought. As we sometimes say, 'I have a word to say to you,' meaning we have thought of something; the 'word' is already in the mind, unspoken.

'Trinity' is Latin for 'threeness,' as 'unity' is Latin for 'oneness.' When England was first Catholic, men used the English word, 'The Holy Threeness,' instead of the Latin 'Trinity.' The word 'spirit' first meant breath. Breath is used to mean life, because when the breath goes life goes. So it means our souls which give life to our bodies; and then comes to mean any living mind, whether of men or angels or God.

The Athanasian Creed.—Our Lord told us of all these great mysteries in His own simple and homely language. But the restless minds of men, especially heretics, were always trying to explain His words in new words of their own, and they generally did it wrongly. But the Church always knew what He meant, as He had promised ; and in order to keep His teaching intact she had continually to deny the new heretical ways of speaking about these mysteries, and to find the right words for each point as it arose. The fullest statement of her mind is in the Athanasian Creed, where she says : 'We must honour One God in Threeness, and Threeness in Oneness ; not confusing the Persons, and not dividing the Being. For the Father is one Person, the Son another, the Holy Ghost another. But the Godhead of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is one, Their glory equal ; Their majesty alike eternal. What the Father is, such is the Son, such the Holy Ghost. The Father is uncreated, the Son uncreated, the Holy Ghost uncreated. The Father infinite, the Son infinite, the Holy Ghost infinite. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, the Holy Ghost eternal. Yet there are not three eternals, but One Eternal. Nor three uncreateds, nor three infinites ; but One Uncreated and One Infinite. So also the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, the Holy Ghost almighty. Yet there are not three

almighties, but One Almighty. So the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghost God. Yet there are not three Gods, but One God. So the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, the Holy Ghost Lord. And yet there are not three Lords, but One Lord. For, as Christian truth makes us confess each Person separately to be God and Lord ; so the Catholic religion forbids us to speak of three gods or three lords. The Father is not from anyone : not made nor created nor begotten. The Son is from the Father alone ; not made nor created, but begotten. The Holy Ghost is from the Father and Son ; not made nor created nor begotten ; but proceeding from them. There is, therefore, One Father, not three Fathers ; One Son, not three Sons ; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts. And in this Threeness there is no before or after, no greater or less ; but all three Persons are alike eternal and alike equal. So that all through we must, as was said above, honour the Oneness in the Three, and the Threeness in the One.'

Suggestions for Further Reading

Bede Jarrett's *Meditations for Layfolk* (Catholic Truth Society) may be read on this subject ; especially on the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER III

MYSTERIES

God gives each mind its limits.—We find that minds are limited ; as eyes are limited. Our eyes can see up to a certain distance, and down to a certain minuteness, but no further. There are things so small that we cannot see them, even with microscopes ; things so far that we cannot see them, even with telescopes. There are animals that can see further than we ; other animals that can see things too small for our eyes. But each has its own range of sight, limited at both ends ; a range suited to the life it is to live.

So it is with understandings. Each animal has its own range of understanding : some so much that we can make friends and servants of them ; others have little sense, or none. And we too have limited understandings ; and we can see our own limitations. A child understands less than a man. A man who studies a trade, a science, a game, sees clearly things that are utter mysteries to another who has not studied. More than that : the cleverest of men can ask questions which he cannot answer, nor anyone else. He sees things

happen ; he sees that there must be a reason for their happening, a reason that ought to be understandable, yet neither he nor any other man can understand it.

Mystery.—That is what we mean by a mystery : a thing that we know is true, yet we cannot see how or why it is true. It is a mystery only to those who cannot understand it. We amuse children, or dogs, by showing them things which are mysterious to them though not to us ; like the image in a mirror. They know that the look of a dog is there ; they cannot understand why there is no real dog. After a time they trouble no more about it ; they rest content in the truth which they know, and forget to wonder why it is so. The dog soon knows that there is an image and no real dog ; he never understands why it is so, and he soon stops wondering.

Mysteries in this world.—That is what we all do about mysteries, the big mysteries which no man can understand because they are beyond the range of our reason. We know that we can trust our own eyes and ears. But those philosophers who have tried to understand *why* we should trust them and *how* they give true news to our minds, have found that we simply cannot understand it. Their studying leaves some of them wondering whether we *can* trust our senses ; others wondering whether we have any eyes and ears at all ;

others wondering whether we have any minds. So, in practical life, we all rest content to know that we can trust them, and forget to wonder about the how and why, which are a mystery to us.

An egg is a mystery. We know that the eggstuff can be changed into thousands of different things—into man-flesh, rat-flesh, owl-flesh, according to who eats the egg. But in an egg that is hatched, there is some power that changes part of the stuff into bones, other parts into beak and claws, feathers and comb, brain and flesh ; and sets all these in their right places and order, to work with each other and feed each other ; and wakes habits and instincts in the living bird. We know that all this is done ; but how it is done no man can understand. It is to us a mystery ; and most of us have stopped wondering about its mystery, and are content to know the fact.

Now, the few students who try to understand the how and the why of facts find that every single study brings them face to face with a mystery. They see their way as far as our minds can see ; and then see facts still before them, like the facts about the egg, and know there must be reasons for those facts, reasons quite able to be understood by a suitable mind ; and yet our minds are not suitable. The reasons are beyond the range of the understanding God has given us, and must remain mysteries to us.

Everything we know of God is to us a mystery.—If this is so in studying this world, much more is it so in learning about God. What we know of the smallest plant is a mystery to us; much more mysterious are the truths we know about God. For God is so hidden from us, more than anything in this world. And God is so different from us, that we can never understand Him as He really is.

If we cannot understand the life of an egg, how could we understand the life of God? We cannot understand how our own body and mind are united in one person; much less how three Persons are united in One God, or how human nature and Divine Nature are united in Our Lord. We cannot understand our own knowledge of what we see; how expect to understand God's knowledge?

Our natural knowledge and our supernatural knowledge are alike in this: we know the facts which God lets us know, but we do not fully understand them.

Our words fit creatures, not God.—Think a little more of the difference between us and God. He is infinite, we are finite. Clearly any word that exactly fits us will not exactly fit God. And all our words and thoughts *are* made to fit men and other finite things; we have not a single word or thought that exactly fits God. There is

a like difficulty in an emperor's three-year-old child trying to understand her father's authority and power. How do they explain it to her? They think of the things she does understand, and pick out from them what is most like the truth she is asking for, and so give her the truth as far as she can take it in. When she repeats it, anyone who hears will recognise that that is her childish way of understanding her father's greatness. That is how God teaches us.

We know God, by partial likenesses of Him.—In the things He has made, He has put partial likenesses of Himself. When we are to learn about Him, we are taught from these likenesses;—not to think God is like *them*, but to know that these are partial likenesses to God. (Theologians call this 'analogy'; our knowledge about God is 'analogical.') What, for instance, is God's attitude to us? The best likeness to it, He tells us, is a father's attitude to his children, with its united love and authority. Think of Him as having a Father's authority and a Father's love, and you will begin to get hold of the truth. All fatherhood is named after Him. We call Him 'Father' and speak of His 'Fatherhood' because they are the nearest words we have; but His 'Fatherhood' has none of the limitations of human fatherhood, and is far more than it.

How does the Father differ from the Son or

the Holy Ghost? The nearest likeness on earth is the difference between person and person. So we call them the Divine 'Persons'; knowing that our 'personality' is a partial likeness of theirs.

How does the Second Person stand to the First? God gives us two likenesses to think of: think of an earthly son, the exact image of his father; and think of your own mind conceiving a word which abides in the mind even while it goes forth to others. The Son of God, the Word of God; those two give us the truth as fully as we can grasp it. But there is infinitely more to be known, which only God knows.

God is Love, Infinite Love; and the nearest likeness we have of it is our own love, a copy of His, but limited. There is a world of difference between a man's love and a dog's, yet man and dog truly love each other. There is infinite difference between God's love and man's love; yet it is true that God and man love each other.

There is an endless number of these likenesses in God's world: the invisible things of Him are made known to us by the things we can see. These likenesses are of God's making, hidden in the world since its foundation. Many of them Our Lord pointed out in His teaching. In all of them we notice two things: they give us the truth in the highest form that is possible to us—a created likeness of the Uncreated: and we

need to remember that the *limits* of the created belong to it and not to God. So a great deal of our knowledge of God is knowing how He *is not* limited like creatures—God had no beginning : God has no body : He made all things out of nothing.

In the highest prayers of the saints, they think of God in this way ; passing by every thought that comes to them about Him because they know He is something better than that ; till they are like a man in the dark speaking to an unseen Spirit. This prayer is not easy. By becoming man, Our Lord has made it easy for us. We can easily think of His human love, His anger with sin, His patience with sinners ; and knowing that He is God, we can sometimes think of the Divine love, and wrath, and patience of which the others are pictures.

Suggestions for Further Reading

See the article on 'Analogy' in the *Catholic Encyclopædia ;* Newman's sermon on the Mysteriousness of our present being (*Parochial and Plain Sermons,* Vol. IV. Longmans) ; see also 'Mystery' in Rickaby's *Index to Newman* (Longmans).

CHAPTER IV

GOD'S PLAN IN MAKING US

We are God's.—St. Augustine thought of the change from when there was nothing but God to now, when there are so many angels and men. There was then no one to need His help or ask for it ; and He chose to make us on purpose that we might ask and receive from Him ; gladly ask and gladly receive. The thought gave St. Augustine courage to ask with faith, even when he was asking forgiveness for sin. 'Give what we ask ; You made us from nothing that we might ask You.'

God made us, and all other things, out of nothing, by His word. In making the rest, He need not have made me. Even in my own family, He could have made another brother a little older or a little younger than I am, and not made me. So that He must have chosen to make me personally. I am here, not because He chose to make mankind in general, but because He also chose to make me in particular. It is good sometimes to forget all other creatures and think of God and ourselves only ; there was nothing, and out of

nothing God has made me, all that I have, all that I am. It helps us to know how wholly we belong to Him—our Creator, Lord, Master, King, Father, —and how not at all to ourselves. St. Paul says, 'What hast thou that thou hast not received? And if thou hast received, why glory in it as if thou hadst not received?'

God makes our bodies from the earth that He made out of nothing in the beginning. He makes our souls direct from nothing.

Why God made us.—Since we are made by Him, the beginning of all religion is to know what He made us for. We learn this partly from our nature and partly from His teaching. He made us not for the natural life we live in this world, but to be His friends for ever; to see, love, and enjoy Him in heaven.

We learn the nature of things by watching what they are able to do. Plants drink in the sunshine, and grow, flower and fruit, and make food for animals. Animals feed and grow and bring up their young; they can see and hear; some of them can know and love and hate. By looking at these things we see what is their nature; they ought to be able to see, or swim, or fly at a certain age; and if they cannot, it is against their nature.

Our double nature.—Now when we look at ourselves, to see what we can do and so learn what

nature God has given us, we find that we are able to do what animals can do and also what angels can do. We can see and hear, live a family life, love and hate and fight like the animals. But besides that life we live another life in our own minds that no other man can see. We think of things there, that are not bodily things. One is always thinking of beauty, or of sorrow, and making poetry about it. Another thinks of justice or injustice, of truth, honesty, love. We know what these things are ; and we love them, or hate them, or fear them. We sometimes talk to other men about them, because we know that their minds also understand these things. More than that, we know that a person does not need a body to understand these things, but only a mind. The angels understand them, and God. And we—we who are at the same time living a bodily life like the animals. Our nature is both spiritual and animal. We are in two worlds, the world of animals and the world of angels. We are the highest of all the animals, because our spirit can think how to destroy or capture or use any of them. We are the lowest of the spirits, a little lower than the angels ; for our soul lives in and works with a body.

God has given us this double nature, and both parts of it are good. But the higher part is the life that we share with God and the angels ; the

lower part is the life we share with the brutes. Plainly God means us to live both lives, and to take most care of the higher, the life of our soul.

And our supernatural life.—It is natural for us to know about right and wrong, truth, justice and injustice ; to know that God watches these things ; that He loves right and hates sin ; that He sees all our thoughts though we cannot see Him ; that He gives us all the good we have, and wishes us to do good to others. And then, it is natural to wish that He would draw away the veil that hides Him from us ; that He would speak to us, and make us able to hear Him and see Him. This is wishing for something supernatural, above our nature.

And God has done what we wish. He has spoken and made us able to hear Him. He has told us what life He means us to live. Not the life of a man who knows *about* God and wonders about Him. But He means us to share the life that our Blessed Lord, His Son, lived as man.

As man, He is still the Son of the Father ; knowing Him, loving Him with the same personal knowledge and love that He has had from eternity. These overflow from His Godhead to His human nature ; as in us the joy of the soul overflows into the gladness of our voice and our look. All the fullness of His Godhead dwells in Him bodily. He works the works of His

Father. The Father is in Him, and He in the Father.

Like Our Lord's life.—This is the life that God means us to share: to know Him personally and love Him personally; to be His children, His friends, His lovers. But how can we? It is natural for Our Lord to do all this, since He is God. But our nature cannot do it.

God makes us able to do it. He makes our nature in some way like to His own; we are, as Our Lord says, born again; or as St. Paul says, we are a new creation, made anew; we receive, as it were, a super-nature, so that we can do (and are bound to do) things that are impossible to our nature: we can share the Divine life.

This lifting our nature is called the gift of grace (or in heaven the light of glory). By this supernatural grace, our nature shares in an imperfect way the goodness of God. And, therefore, our mind can now share the knowledge of God, by faith; our heart can share His love, by charity. We are His friends, His adopted children. We find His personal friendship for us in our prayers, where He guides us and comforts us; and in His Sacraments, where He strengthens us and enlarges our life.

In this world we are to know, love, and serve Him for a time; in the next we are to see, love,

and enjoy Him for ever. Our knowing Him by faith will change into seeing Him ; our serving will change into enjoying Him ; but our love will still be love.

The supernatural perfects the natural.—By our supernatural life, if we live it in earnest, God changes all our natural life for the better. (Our natural life is our dealing with others, and the earth, and ourselves.) We learn to think of others as God thinks of them, with the same love that He has for us. We see that the things in the world are His beautiful gifts to us, to make us love Him, not them. We see that we ourselves have just one duty—to do His will ; if we do that, there is nothing else to be anxious about. So it comes that in Catholic countries, and in saints, where the supernatural life is strongest, the natural life is most beautiful and simple ; and most joyous too.

We are spirits, like God.—To be a friend of God is a very wonderful thing ; so wonderful that it might seem impossible. Friendship is only possible between those who are like each other—man with man, horse with horse. How can God make friends with me, who am infinitely below Him ? Is it not like saying I could make friends with a stone ? No, not with a stone ; but with a bird or beast that has enough sense to know me, and to love me in its own way ; with

it I can make friends. And in the same way, if God will stoop to make a friend of me, I am able to know Him and love Him in return. I am sufficiently like Him for that. Because my mind is a spirit, and can know Him who is a Spirit also. And, knowing God, we can love Him.

Immortal, like God.—But for how long? God has lived all eternity; my few years are but as a moment in His sight. Are we to be friends for a moment? No, but for ever. The past eternity is God's only; but the coming eternity is mine also. I shall live as long as God, for my soul will never die. He has made my mind a spirit immortal like Himself, that He may love me for ever.

It is for the sake of this everlasting love that He made me. To see Him; my mind face to face with His mind; so that all His beauty, His goodness, His splendour, are an intense and unending joy to me. 'I shall know Him even as I am known; I shall see face to face. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' This has been called the beatific vision, the vision or seeing that makes us utterly happy.

Our nature craves for God.—Our life in this world is to lead to the eternal life with God, and can be understood only if we bear that fact in mind. Those who deny heaven find this life a puzzle. It is as if they kept studying the life of seedling trees in the time when they are still

growing underground, forgetting that this is only a preparation for the life above ground. Such people grow very bitter, against God or His Church ; but in their very bitterness they bear witness that they were made for everlasting life. They are bitter at the injustice of this life ; at its unhappiness ; at our teaching what they think untrue. Why be bitter ? Because there is in you a craving for absolute justice, for absolute truth, and for happiness—that is to say, a craving for heaven and for God, who is Truth and Justice. The very fact that you are made with these cravings shows that you are not made for this short life where they cannot be satisfied, but for life everlasting, where you will see the infinite truth and justice of all God's doings, and the perfect happiness He has prepared for you.

Our free-will may lose Him.—Next, we must know that God does not force us to receive His grace. Our own free-will decides our eternity. Our Lord says : *If thou wilt* enter into life, keep the commandments. *If you will* forgive men, your heavenly Father will forgive you ; but *if you will not* forgive men, neither will your Father forgive you. He that is ashamed of Me, I will be ashamed of him ; he that confesses Me, I will confess him. Ask, and you shall receive. Judge not, and you shall not be judged ; in what judgment you judge, in the same you shall be judged.

It is always what *we* choose. God will, if we do, the Catechism says. In the Old Testament God said, 'I have let them go their own way. He would not have blessing, and blessing is far from him: he chose cursing, and cursing comes on him.' We must choose to live the supernatural life, or we shall lose it. Now we can take only one step at a time. We can get to the hill-top if we will; not by one act of the will, but step by step, and not changing our mind. We can become meek, humble, truthful, not by once saying 'I will,' but by taking the step in the right direction and not the wrong direction each time we have to choose. There are people who, because we cannot change suddenly and completely, say we have no free-will and cannot choose whether to grow better or worse. Yet they tell a man that he can become a good cricketer or a good scholar if he will take the trouble; they ought to see that in like manner he can become a good man, one step at a time.

There is a contrary mistake, the mistake of thinking we will live a wild life for a time and then turn to God—because some have turned to Him after a bad life. We see the nonsense of saying to anyone else, 'I will for some years despise you and go my own way, not caring how much I insult you or grieve you; and then I will suddenly begin to love you more than

myself, and to hate myself for treating you so badly.' Far more is it nonsense and wickedness to say so to God.

The Christian's rule of life.—When a boy chooses whether he will be a lawyer or not, he is really choosing whether he will go through all the study and training needed to prepare him. So our choice is about *this* life. Not will you go to heaven after death? but will you live now the life that will bring you to heaven, the life of a lover of God? We have to choose; and to hold fast to our choice to the end. For if we hope to be saved we must follow a certain rule of life. What rule, what kind of life is worthy of a child of God? God knows, and He taught it fully when He was in the world. We are to treat God rightly, treat our neighbour rightly, treat ourselves rightly. Love God, with all our heart, soul, mind, strength; give Him His right place as Lord of all, so that He shall never be disobeyed no matter who else is pleased or displeased. Love our neighbour, doing to every man as we should like to be done by were we in his place. Love ourselves? No; deny ourselves and take up a daily cross; know our enemies, the world, devil, flesh, and our weakness against them, and therefore hold fast to the help of God.

The life of a child of God is this: to love to live according to His will, and to love to live by

His help. To teach us His will, and to give us His help, He made His Church.

God wills all men to be saved.—Every soul born into the world is meant to have the supernatural life of knowing and loving God personally and being helped to live a higher than natural life. Theologians write about 'man in a state of mere nature,' but they do not mean that some men have been left in that state; they are only explaining 'nature' to make clear what we mean by a supernatural state.

What about pagans and savages? They, too, are called to the supernatural life, to know and love God personally in this life. But their friendship with Him can be shown only in prayer and in trying to do right; they have no sacraments nor Mass, nor the teaching of His Church. All they can know of Him is what they learn in prayer and the little truth that their tribe has kept since Adam's time. St. Peter tells us that God made His Church to be the one means of saving men in a world of sin, as He had before appointed the ark the only refuge from the flood; and so everyone who knows this and stays out of the Church is throwing away his soul's salvation. But these poor people do not know it, and they have to be saved without the Church if at all. Our Lord tells us that He will judge them (as we should expect) according to the chance they had. Less

will be required of them, because less was given to them : they will be judged according to their works : if they knew not His will, and did things worthy of stripes, they will be beaten with few stripes, where we should be beaten with many. St. Peter said, 'I perceive that in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh justice is acceptable to Him.'

Suggestions for Further Reading

On this subject may be read *Christ the Life of the Soul*, by Marmion (Sands) ; Vonier, *The Human Soul* (Herder) ; *The Words of Life*, by Martindale (Catholic Truth Society).

CHAPTER V

THE INCARNATION

Christ is God.—Those who heard Our Lord's teaching did not at first know that He is God. They saw that He was different from other men. He knew everything that they had ever done ; He knew their most secret thoughts. And instead of being angry or scornful, and crushing them with shame, they found that He loved them, in spite of all their wrong-doing. He tried to lift them to better and holier ways. He made the highest and holiest things so plain and so sweet, that the simplest of the poor could understand them and love them. Then they saw that the winds and seas obeyed Him, evil spirits obeyed Him. And in the end they knew that He was God.

God had taught them the way to heaven ; not by sending visions and knowledge into their hearts, as sometimes He does ; not by sending messengers, angels, or prophets to teach them, as sometimes He does ; but by coming Himself and speaking to them face to face. They had heard God's teaching from His own lips.

True God, true Man.—But He seems to be a man? Yes, because He *is* a man, as we are; but that Man is God—God the Son. Does it mean then that this Man made heaven and earth? Yes. Made His own Mother? Yes, and made His own human soul and body. And does He know and see all things? Yes, all the thoughts of our hearts He sees; and He judges those who are dying now; and us who are not dying yet, He already sees us judged for all eternity.

One Person.—But He seems to be hungry and cold? Yes, He suffers like other men. Does that mean that God is hungry and cold? Yes, it is God who has nowhere to lay His head and spends the night praying on the hillside. It is God that they mistrust, and doubt, and blaspheme; they scourge God, and spit upon Him; and on the Cross they kill God.

But God is immortal, impassible: He cannot die, cannot suffer? In His Godhead, no; and therefore He has taken to Him a manhood like ours, in which to suffer for us. What God can do, He can do, for He is God. What man can do, He can do; except sin; for He is a man. In His Godhead He creates; in His Manhood He suffers; but it is the same Person that creates and that suffers. Just as we have body and soul and we do some things with the body and some with the soul. My body sleeps, but we say I

sleep ; my soul understands, and we say I understand ; because, whether my soul does it or my body does it, I am the person who does it. So when Our Lord does anything, you can, if you like to, stop and ask, Did He do that by His Godhead or by His Manhood ? But the important thing is to remember *who* did it—God the Son.

Two Natures.—When you ask, Who is this ? you want to know the person. When you ask, What is he ? you want to know his nature. What is the Blessed Michael ? He is an angel. What is Blessed John the Baptist ? He is a man. For any of these there is only one answer when you ask what they are ; one is an angel, one a man, one a lion, one a stone. Even when you ask, What is the Father ? What is the Holy Ghost ? the answer is, He is God and nothing else. For each of these, Creator or creature, has only one nature. But when you ask, What is Our Lord ? there are two answers—He is God, and He is man. For He has the two natures. Why do we say He is man ? For the same reason that we say anyone else is man. Anyone who has a human soul and a human body is man ; Our Lord has them and He is man, as we are. Why do we say He is God ? For the same reason that we say the Father is God, or the Holy Ghost. There is only one Divine Nature, the Eternal Godhead ; and the Father has that Divine Nature,

the Son has it, the Holy Ghost has it. We say Our Lord has a body and soul *like* ours ; we do not say He has a Divine Nature *like* the Father's, but the same Nature that God the Father has ; for there is only one Divine Nature.

How long has He been God ? and how long has He been Man ? Clearly He has been God for ever and ever ; no one could begin to be God. He has been a man for 1922 years, if the years have been rightly counted (probably they have not). Before that time, if David or Daniel had asked, What is He ? the answer would have been, He is God and nothing else ; for then He was not yet a man.

His Mother is the Mother of God the Son.—He became Man when He chose a Mother for Himself, and in her womb made a body and soul for Himself. At the creation of any child we could ask, For whom is this body and soul ? for an apostle ? a servant of God ? an enemy ? But this Body and Soul are made not for any friend of God, but for God Himself, for God the Son. From that moment He is a man as well as God. As God eternal, unchangeable, He is the Son of God, born of the Father from all eternity. As Man, He is the Son of Mary, as other men are the sons of their mothers. There are those who do not like to speak of her as we speak of all other mothers ; who would call her, not Mother of God

the Son, but Mother of His Manhood or Mother of His Body. As if we ever spoke of the mother of my body, or the mother of your manhood. We always say a *person's* mother, my mother, your mother. We must speak of Our Lady as of any other mother. Has She a Son? Yes. Who is He? He is God the Son. Then She is the Mother of God the Son.

Mistakes about the Incarnation.—Although most Catholics and many Protestants take in this truth of the Incarnation quite rightly, yet there are some who get it wrong at some point; and it is only when a mistake is put clearly before them that they say, 'I always thought that was the true teaching.' For this reason it is necessary to go over the mistakes that have been made. We shall see that, as the Church says in one of her prayers, Our Blessed Lady sets right every one of these heresies; for once you know that she is the Mother of God, you see that the heresy really makes out that she is not, and therefore must be a mistake.

Some have said that Our Lord was a real man, but not God till He grew up: and then He was made God. As if anyone who was not God could begin to be God. God is unchangeable, for ever and ever. When God the Son became Man, it made no change whatever in His Godhead. As Man, He, God the Son, was born of the Virgin Mary. These people

made her to be Mother of a man only, not Mother of God.

Some thought that God the Son appeared on earth as an angel does, in the form of a man ; or as the Holy Ghost appeared, in the form of a dove. Zachary saw the angel at the right hand of the altar, and heard his message. When the angel disappeared he knew that there had been no body there and no tongue ; but the angel had taken the appearance of a body and the sound of a voice in order to give God's message. The Holy Ghost appeared under the form of a dove ; but there was no real dove there. So they thought Our Lord took the appearance of a man and seemed to eat, to suffer, to die ; but really had no body and did none of these things. And if He had no body, then He was not born, and Our Lady was not Mother of God. But He *is* truly man, as we are. On Easter evening the Apostles thought He might be a spirit appearing to them, and He answered, 'Handle and see : for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see Me to have.'

Some again said this : 'He has a real body, as we have. And the Spirit of God dwells in it. As my body is made alive by my soul, so His body is made alive by the Spirit of God.' No ; that is completely wrong. His body is kept alive by His human soul, which He made

out of nothing as He made your soul and mine. In us there are the two parts of man—body and soul. In Him there are a human body and human soul, and the Spirit of God, His Divinity. If He had not a human, created soul as well as a body, He would not be a man. A soulless body is not a man. God could create a human body, and let some spirit—say, some angel—move it ; but it would not be a man. Our Lady's Child is truly Man, having a body and soul like ours.

Others made what sounds a strange mistake. They said : 'Of course He has only one will—His Divine will. He could not have one will as God and another as man.' In His human soul there are three powers : His memory, understanding, and will. This human will He made when He made His soul. His Divine Will is the one eternal Will that has belonged to the Father and the Holy Ghost for ever. We cannot think the created will is the eternal uncreated Will, any more than we can think the created soul is the Eternal Spirit of God. So these people said that He made Himself a human soul that cannot will. But a soul that cannot will is not a soul. It is like talking of a light that cannot shine. When they said He has no human will, they really said He has no soul and is not a man.

What misled them was, knowing that Our Lord as man would always follow the Divine Will. When I say, 'I have no will in the matter : your will is mine,' I do not mean that I have no power to choose ; I mean that I *have* power to choose, and what I choose is to let you decide. Our Lord as man had power to choose ; and He chose to follow the Divine Will : 'Not my will, but Thine be done.'

Others, again, knowing that He has a perfect human body and perfect human soul, made a worse mistake, 'dividing Christ,' as St. John says. They said : 'This Man is so holy, that God the Son dwells in Him always, guiding Him; and the two are close friends.' They are not close friends ; they are the same Person. This Man is not guided by God the Son ; He *is* God the Son. Our Lady is not mother of a friend of God ; she is Mother of God. There are not two persons in Jesus Christ—God and a friend of His ; there is only one Person, and that Person is God the Son. This last false teaching is the one that is now spreading very fast among people outside the Church.

Some Catholics who make no mistake in these ways are mistaken in another way. They know that Our Lord is truly man and truly God. But is He God the Father ? or the Son ? or the Holy Ghost ? Some answer, 'They are all the same

God.' Yes ; but they are three different Persons, and Our Lord is only one Person. Which is He ? He is the second Person, God the Son. The Father did not become man ; nor the Holy Ghost.

'Jesus Christ is God the Son, made man for us.' Little children understand this truly, if they are rightly taught ; and going through all these explanations does not add new teaching, but only makes sure that they have fallen into no mistake. The mystery in it, which none of us can understand, is how One Person can have both a Divine and a human nature, can be God and man at the same time. Just as we do not understand about ourselves, how our mind and body are joined together in one person.

In the Athanasian Creed the Church says : 'Our Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God is God and man. He is God, begotten of the substance of His Father, before all time ; and He is Man, born of the substance of His Mother, in the world. Perfect God ; Perfect Man with reasoning soul and human body. Equal to the Father in His Godhead ; less than the Father in His Manhood.

'God and Man though He be, yet He is not two, but one, Christ. One, not by changing His Godhead into flesh ; but by taking unto God a human nature. One, not by mingling Godhead

with manhood, having a mingled substance, but because He is one Person. For just as a reasoning soul and a body is one man, so God and man is the one Christ.'

Suggestions for Further Reading

See Vonier, *The Personality of Christ* (Longmans).

CHAPTER VI

THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

I. The State of Grace

Friendship with God is called the Grace of God, and help from God is called the Grace of God. In the Catechism we find much teaching about each of these.

The one thing that matters is our friendship with God. We call it the real 'life' of our soul. Because we have many different things that we call 'lives,' and this is the highest of all. An accident or a shock may kill a man's reason, may kill all his senses, and leave only his bodily life. God may restore the life of his senses, restore the life of his mind, restore his love of his friends and his family. These different lives rise one upon the other, and we always feel that the lower lives are wasted if the higher are not there. And *all* these are wasted if we have not the highest life of all, the life of friendship of God. This is the one that God made us for—to know *Him*, and to love *Him*.

To love Him as a friend loves a friend ; to be loved by Him as His friend ; this is supernatural. It is natural for us to have friends in this world. And it would be natural for us to think about God and how good He is in a far-off way ; as men who have a good king whom they never saw would naturally think lovingly of him, and do things as they supposed he would wish them done. But God wants more than that from us. Suppose the King comes to a man who never before saw him, and makes a friend of him, talks with him, helps him, lets him help in the King's business. That is what God offers to each of us, a real friendship ; we are glad to ask His help and do His work and know His thoughts ; He is glad to help us, and to have our service and our love. It is not natural, but far above nature, that we (or even an angel) should thus have God for a personal friend ; and therefore this life of friendship going on between God and the soul is called our supernatural life ; while all our dealings with men and things are our natural life.

This supernatural life of friendship with God has many names. To be in the love of God, to be in charity (the gift of love by which we love Him), to be in the favour of God, in the Grace of God (grace is Latin for favour), to be in the state of grace, in sanctifying grace, in habitual

grace ; all these mean one thing, that you are friends with God. And if you are not, if you have killed your friendship, you have lost His favour, you are in disgrace with Him, in His anger, in sin, in mortal sin, in a state of sin. All these mean one thing, that your soul is dead because you have killed the friendship with God which is your soul's highest life.

By this friendship God reigns in our hearts, by this grace of love. 'We will come to him and abide with him,' says Our Lord. Our souls are temples where the Holy Ghost dwells.

Friendship has two sides, God's love for me and my love for God. If God is to make a friend of me, I must be clean enough for Him to love me. He cannot make a friend of one who loves what He hates. Therefore I cannot be in His grace, cannot have His love, till I am free from mortal sin and pleasing to Him by wishing to love Him. This is why this gift of God's friendship is called 'sanctifying grace'—it makes me at least holy enough for God to take me into His friendship. Then my love for Him will lead me often to think of Him, often to speak to Him, always to seek to please Him.

This love of God and of goodness is a soul's beauty. 'Hail, full of grace'; we think not only of the great grace and favour God showed her, but also of the grace and beauty of her soul.

The word grace means both those things—that it is a favour from God, and that it makes the soul beautiful.

In Baptism Our Lord says we are born again. Birth is the beginning of life. In Baptism begins our supernatural life of friendship with God. He cleanses us completely from all sin, so that He can love us better ; and He gives us our first love for Him, charity.

In our natural life everything that we use is a gift of God—our strength, sight, knowledge ; and each time we use them we need His help to use them. And in our supernatural life everything we use is a gift of God—our faith, hope, love, sacraments ; and we need His help each time we use them. So that in both lives everything is a gift of God, a favour which He was not bound to give. It is convenient to have different names for the two lives. We call natural gifts those gifts that are for our natural lives ; but the gifts needed for our supernatural life (our friendship with God) are called graces. The Catechism would be clearer if it said 'A grace is *any and every* supernatural gift God gives us to make us holy and help us to heaven.' The greatest of all these gifts is of course our friendship with Him ; all the others are to foster this friendship, which is often called *THE* grace of God. 'Faith is a supernatural gift of God'—then

Faith is a grace ; so is Hope ; so is Charity. But Charity is The Grace.

II. What Sanctifying Grace is in Itself

In the last Gospel of the Mass, St. John tells us that Our Lord Himself is full of grace : 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us . . . full of grace.' And just after he adds, 'And of His fulness, all we have received.' The sanctifying grace, which makes us children and friends of God, comes to us from Our Lord ; He is full of it. St. Luke says 'the grace of God was in Him' as a child, and He advanced in grace as in age. The perfect Babe grew into the perfect Boy ; the perfect Boy into the perfect Man. So that the sanctifying grace which is the beauty of our souls is also the beauty of Our Lord's human soul, and comes to us from Him.

Our Lord has given us many pictures and helps to make us think about this grace and beauty of His soul and ours. It will be best to take first the highest thing He said about it. This grace is the very love which from eternity the Divine Persons have for one another. Praying to His Father for us, He asks 'that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them' (St. John xvii. 26). We think first of the Divine Love before the world was made, a love infinite,

beyond our understanding ; the Father's love for the Son, the Son's for the Father ; this love is the very joy of God, His peace, His very nature, for God is love. Then God the Son took to Himself the nature of man. There is now One true Man who is a partner in that eternal love of the Holy Trinity. In His human nature it pleased all the fullness of the Godhead to dwell. He can still say to His Father, 'Thou hast loved Me before the creation of the world.' His personal love for His Father is His one eternal love.

This divine love dwelling in a human heart is the gift of sanctifying grace. It is communicated from Our Lord to us : 'that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them.' It belongs to Our Lord naturally, because of who He is. He wishes to adopt us one by one into the family of God, that He may be the eldest of many brethren ; He gives us power to be made sons of God by adoption, as He is by nature ; we too are partners in the love that binds together the Blessed Trinity. So St. Peter says, not that we are to be lifted to Our Lord's human nature, but 'that you may be made partakers of the divine nature,' which the Church remembers every day in the Mass-prayer 'that we may be sharers of His Godhead, who stooped to become partaker of our manhood.'

Our Lord used pictures to help us to think of

this divine love in our souls (the Church uses them at baptisms to remind us what God is giving to the child). He compares it to a white wedding-garment which makes the soul fit for His wedding with His Church. He compares it to salt which keeps things from going bad. He compares it to a burning light: 'I am the light of the world. I am come to cast fire on the earth. You are the light of the world.' This picture of fire is the one the saints dwell on to teach us. 'The fire of Thy love,' a great fire spreading to and kindling our souls; so that they become part of the same fire. The fire, in kindling something new, first warms it and dries it—a picture of the love of God preparing the sinner to repent. Then when the flame is once kindled, the fire continues to master whatever resists it, till the wood or the iron is fire through and through. So the soul is purified till it is wholly on fire: not with its own kindling but with the fire that came from heaven to kindle it. 'The love wherewith Thou hast loved Me' is in our souls.

Another picture God uses both in the Old and the New Testament. The steeping of Our Lord's human nature through and through with the holiness and love of God is compared to the way oil steeps into the skin. And when the same love is communicated to us, the same picture is used, as if the oil overflowed from Him to us. It is

from this picture that Our Lord gets His name 'Christ'—the anointed. 'God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness beyond all Thy fellows,' said the Psalmist to Him. And from this picture we get the name Chrism, for the oil put on the baby's head to show that he is now a Christian, steeped through like Christ with the Divine love.

This grace of sharing the love of the Blessed Trinity seems like the happiness of heaven. The love is the same, then and now; the sight is different. Now we see darkly, as in a glass, Him 'whom not having seen, you love.' Then we shall see Him face to face. We are now the sons of God, by love. It hath not yet appeared what we shall be; we know that when He shall appear we shall be like to Him, because we shall see Him as He is. So that the change from the state of *grace* to the *glory* of heaven is the change from love in absence to love face to face.

Our Lord's picture of the change from grace to glory is that we are now like men whose Master is away; they have his house and his goods to take care of, and they know his orders. And in the night he comes suddenly and finds them faithfully at work, and he says to them, 'You sit down now to rest, and I will minister to you.' What He will minister, eye hath not seen nor ear heard nor heart imagined.

III. Actual Graces (The Help of God)

We pray that God may enable us, by His grace, to do His will. We pray that God may give us grace not to yield to temptation. These prayers are for *help* from God ; light for the mind, strength for the will. The help is called grace because it is given for our supernatural life. These graces are not our friendship with God, but are helps given for the sake of that friendship, to enable us to act as a friend of God ought to act. They are called 'actual' graces because they are to help us to *act* aright—help in doing things.

Does God give such help to those who are not in His grace, who are His enemies? Many Catholics give a false (Pelagian) answer—'Not till they repent and ask for His help,' or 'Yes, if they ask for it.' But to repent and to ask for God's help are 'good works towards our salvation'; we cannot do them of ourselves: we need the help of God's grace before we can even ask for other graces. So, although God gives us grace chiefly by prayer and by the Sacraments, He gives before these the grace to pray. This grace is always waiting for everyone, sinner or saint, as long as he is in this world, though he may have done nothing to deserve it. It is 'freely bestowed,' given as a favour, and therefore called grace. Then

if he prays for more grace, he will receive it : God has promised. 'Ask, and you shall receive.' 'Your Father will give the good Spirit to those that ask Him.' And if then he receives Sacraments worthily, he receives more and greater graces. For God, by appointing His Sacraments as the means of grace, promised that they shall always give grace to those who receive them worthily.

From this we see that, though grace is a favour, freely bestowed, which God was not bound to give us, yet He has bound Himself, by His promises. That is why we firmly trust to reach everlasting life. He is infinitely good, and therefore 'Thy pity will follow me about all the days of my life,' offering us the grace to pray. If we do what He requires of us—pray—He will then give us all the means necessary to obtain everlasting life ; for He is infinitely powerful, and can find means to save the greatest sinner. If again we do what He requires of us—use these means—then He will give us eternal life, His friendship for ever. These things He has promised to do, and He is faithful to His promises.

The whole friendship that God offers me is a pure favour (*i.e.* grace) which He was not bound to give me. But once He offers it, He binds Himself to treat me lovingly as long as I treat Him lovingly. But if I insult Him by

mortal sin and throw away His friendship, He is not bound to offer it to me again. If He does, it is a pure favour. The wonderful thing is that as long as I live in this world, He does keep offering to forgive me and make me His friend again.

Besides prayer and the Sacraments, there are many other means of holiness, which the Church offers to all : such means as Mass, fasting, advice and instruction, good books, and many others, all of which are means of grace to those who use them.

IV. The Grace of the Sacraments

The greatest graces that God has to give us He gives by the Sacraments. In our natural life there are certain things like them : we come to the use of reason, we get educated ; we recover from a sickness, we come to our full-grown strength. These are not the life itself, like the state of grace in the soul. They are not help in doing something, like actual graces in the soul. Rather they are great advances and improvements in our life, reminding us of Our Lord's saying, ' I am come that they may have life, *and have it more abundantly*.' In the Sacraments He makes the life of the soul fuller, more abundant ; either by feeding it, by healing it, or by giving some new power or work.

Baptism.—Baptism is birth into the supernatural life. It is the giving us the friendship of God, and therefore it is the greatest event in the life of the soul. The grace of Baptism (which means the favour done us in Baptism) is the gift of life ; we are cleansed from all that can displease God, and are given power to know Him, trust Him, love Him ; in fact we become the friends of God—children of God, says St. John ; making it clear that the love between God and us is like the love between father and child.

Holy Eucharist.—Baptism gives us love ; Holy Communion feeds that love. The grace of Holy Communion is to make us love God more than we did before. Our Lord comes in this Sacrament to be the life of our souls. But the life of our souls means only one thing—love. He comes to be the love of our souls. And food, food for that love. Feeding love means keeping it alive and making it stronger. How feed our love for God ? We on our side feed it by acts of love. God on His side feeds it by this greatest act of love. There is only one thing to do if you would make anyone love you—go to him yourself and try to draw his love to you. God, when He would make us love Him more, does not send messengers or gifts. He comes to us Himself.

The strength given in Holy Communion is therefore simply a stronger love. It can be

likened to the strength given to the body's life by daily bread.

Confirmation.—Confirmation gives a different strength, once for all; which is likened to the strength that comes when the body reaches manhood. It changes the child of God into a soldier of God, the new-born Christian into the strong and perfect (*i.e.* full-grown) Christian. The grace of the Sacrament is this new kind of strength which fits us to do a man's and a soldier's work for God; not merely to be loved and sheltered by Him, but to suffer and endure for Him.

Holy Orders, Matrimony.—In Holy Orders, and in Marriage, you take on you part of God's work. The priest takes charge of a parish to bring the souls in it to heaven. He will minister to them what they need for their supernatural life. The married couple take charge of a home to bring the souls in it to heaven; to see that those in the home get all they need for their natural life and their supernatural life. You offer to do one of these works for God. The Sacrament is, that God entrusts the work to you, gives you authority to take charge of these souls and to minister His good gifts to them.

When God gives work, He gives also the wonderful power—to thrive by doing that work. The arm grows strong by working. It does not spend its strength, but gains strength. So

the priest and the parents who undertake God's work receive power to draw strength from doing that work. By doing His work their friendship with Him will grow, they will learn to love Him more. The favour God does us in these two Sacraments is to entrust His work to us, and to enable us by it to profit both ourselves and those we work for.

Penance.—The grace or favour done us in Confession is that God forgives us. Forgiveness means the renewal of love after love has been killed, or wounded, by offence. The change must be in us ; we must again be clean enough for God to love us : clean, that is, from the love of what God hates. And we must wish for the renewal of love, wish to love God and to be loved by Him. If our love had been killed by mortal sin, then forgiveness is giving us over again the friendship which God first gave us in baptism and which we had thrown away. In any case, the sorrowing needed in Confession is sorrowing that God has been wronged ; we ask His forgiveness over again, and thereby we become more loving to Him and more fit to be loved by Him; and He increases the love between us, the sanctifying love which is the life of our souls.

Extreme Unction.—The grace of the last anointing is that God comforts and strengthens a soul that has sinned. We do not anoint a child

who has not reached the use of reason and so cannot sin. It is very easy to mistake what is this comfort and strength given to a soul that has sinned. By confession the dying man is forgiven, and regains the friendship of God. Holy Communion strengthens his love. The Last Blessing gives him indulgence of the punishment that remains due after the guilt of his sins has been forgiven. Though these favours may sometimes be given by Extreme Unction, yet the proper grace of the anointing is not these but something else.

For we have in us, in our lower nature, humours, inclinations, passions, which are prone to evil, and lead to hell. These the soul should master by constantly denying them, saying No to them. When we sin, we give way to one of these and let it master us. This makes it strong and the soul weak; it will *more easily master us* next time. When God forgives us, He restores His love to the soul, but He does not crush down the passions that we have let master us. He expects us now by His daily help to fight against these overgrown passions and little by little weaken them again. But when a man is dying, his soul is losing its control over the body and the lower nature, and they may easily become too strong for him; or he may be afraid that they will; or he may feel a natural terror of death. Therefore God

gives special help, strength against the temptations, comfort against the fear. These are the graces of Extreme Unction.

All the graces of the Sacraments are from the Holy Ghost. He is the Sanctifier, the Life-giver. When the life of God's love begins in our souls, Our Lord says we are born of the Holy Ghost. When we receive our full strength in Confirmation, the Holy Ghost comes to give it. When Our Lord makes priests, He says, Receive ye the Holy Ghost : whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven. All these things one and the same Spirit worketh, giving to each as He sees fit.

Suggestions for Further Reading

Serious students will find St. Thomas' treatment of Grace in *New Things and Old in S. Thomas Aquinas* (Dent).

CHAPTER VII

THE REDEEMER OF THE WORLD

The Fall of Man.—St. Paul speaks of Our Lord as another Adam. Adam was naturally the head of the human race ; Our Lord has taken his place. We can picture the human race first with Adam as its head, and then with Our Lord as its Head.

God made Adam, the first man, to be the first of a great family of children of God. He loved God, by the supernatural love which we call the state of grace ; and he had supernatural mastery over his own nature. He was to bring up his children in the same love of God, and they their children, till the end of time. If he had stood, mankind would have been one great family of children of God in heaven, and he, the first parent, would be the head of the race.

He did not stand, but fell into sin, the sin of disobedience. He threw away the love of God, and he lost at once his mastery over his own nature. His children were born with no love of God in their souls. He was still the parent of all mankind, but not their leader or head ; he had brought both spiritual and bodily death on them all. Left

to himself, he could not make right what he had done. He could not claim to be taken back into God's friendship ; he had thrown it away once, and had no right to ask for it again. He could not atone by offering to suffer, for he was only suffering what he deserved. Nor could any of us his children ; for we are born outside of God's love, and unless He offers His friendship to us freely, we have no right to it.

God sent His Son to save us.—The remedy which God provided for us is more wonderful than His first making us, as the Church tells us in the Mass (*mirabiliter condidisti et mirabilius reformasti*). God the Son would become a man, a child of Adam through His Holy Mother. He would form us into a new family, not by birth but by adoption into it ; He Himself would be in this way the eldest of many brethren, and we the younger. Into this spiritual family all mankind are called to enter, before His time and since, from Adam himself till the end of the world. Can the human race, thus formed into a new family, deal more hopefully with its sin ? Yes. We have now a Head who in His own right can speak to God the Father and claim His love ; He has become our Head in order that we, all mankind, may speak through Him : *Suscipe deprecationem nostram ;* we ask Him to do our pleading ; He is our one mediator.

His Death atones for our sin.—Can we now offer any better atonement for sin? Yes, and an infinitely worthy atonement. There is now One of us whose life is infinitely holy and pleasing to God (My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased); who, as our Head and in our name, will suffer our punishment, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross; Himself innocent, but the Head of a guilty family. St. Peter says, God in His great mercy has newborne us into a living hope; we are redeemed with the precious blood of an immaculate and unspotted lamb, Christ. He Himself says He came to give His life as a redemption for many.

His Death is offered in the Mass.—This offering of His life is offered by the whole family of God, as the Church points out in the Mass. *Hanc igitur oblationem servitutis nostrae, sed et cunctae familiae tuae.* This offering made by us Thy servants and by Thy whole family. Not He, but this family of mankind, needs to offer some atonement for sin; and He has joined this family, and become its Head, on purpose that we may be able to offer a worthy atonement. A King does his private acts as a man, but his public acts as King and representative of his people. Our Lord offers Himself, not because He is God the Son, but because He is the Son of Man, the Head and representative of mankind. This is His priest-

hood. 'Every high priest, taken from among men, is appointed for men in those things that concern God; that he may offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. The blood of Christ, who by the Holy Ghost offered Himself unspotted unto God, hath cleansed our conscience from dead works.'

Our Salvation.—It is important to see clearly what is meant by saying Our Lord has saved us by His death. We are men who of our own will threw away the love of God ; and are able to do so again as long as we live. How has He saved us ? He has not saved us from ourselves, not taken away our free-will ; we can still go to hell if we choose. But think of the state Adam had fallen into—that he could not go to heaven no matter how he wished or tried. It is from that state of hopelessness that Our Lord saved him, and us. As long as we live in this world, if we repent God will receive us back into His love ; and will forgive most of the punishment we deserve for the sake of Our Lord's suffering. All the saints in heaven, even Our Lady, have to thank Him for winning them the chance of earning heaven, and the help to earn it. 'Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God in Thy blood,' St. John heard them saying in heaven.

We never say people are saved until they are dead ; because till then there is always the danger that they will throw away the grace He has won

for them, making a mockery of Him. Until they are safe we do not like to say they are saved. Outside the Church there are some who say they are 'saved' the first time they repent and turn to God in earnest; and some of them seem really to believe that they are safe from all risk of changing their minds and consenting to sin again. 'Thou hast mastered the sting of death, and opened to believers the gates of heaven,' the Church sings to Our Lord in the *Te Deum*. The gates are open; it depends on ourselves whether we enter them or not. Our union with God in this life we call our 'sanctification,' making us holy. Our union with God in heaven we call 'salvation,' making us safe.

Our Lord's Names. Jesus.—Because He thus saved us from sin, and from the punishment of sin, and from the devil, whom we chose to follow when we sinned—because He thus saved us, He is called Jesus, our Saviour. 'Thou shalt call His name Jesus,' the angel told St. Joseph, 'because He shall save His people from their sins.'

The Redeemer.—Because doing this cost Him much humiliation and suffering and death, He is called our Redeemer. To redeem means to save at some cost to ourselves. 'You are bought at a great price,' St. Paul tells us.

The Second Adam.—Because He is the new Head of mankind from whom all draw their

soul's life, St. Paul calls Him the second Adam, who is 'a life-giving Spirit.'

The Son of Man.—And He calls Himself constantly the Son of Man (as if He said the Son of Mankind, the perfect child of men). In this name we can see two meanings—the perfect Man and the Head of mankind. He is the one perfect Man, the one who really is what God meant man to be. If we are asked—any of us—What is 'man' for whom God made this world? is he simply what *you* are? we have to answer, No; I am a badly fallen and imperfect man. And is there no one who really and fully deserves to be called man? Yes, One, the Son of Man. As there is also one perfect woman, His Mother. And, secondly, because He is perfect man, all the authority God gave to mankind belongs to Him, and He is Head of the human race. The Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath, which was made for man. The Father has given Him the judging of the world because He is the Son of Man.

Christ, the Messias.—Because His manhood belongs to God Himself, and the holiness of God fills it through and through, as oil steeps through and through the things on which it is poured, He is called the Anointed, which in Greek is Christ, and in the Jews' language Messias.

The Lamb of God.—Because He sacrificed His life for us, and the Paschal lamb had been sacrificed

as a figure of His death, St. John the Baptist called Him the Lamb of God. 'Behold the Lamb of God : behold Him that taketh away the sins of the world.'

Our Teacher.—God the Son became man not only to save us from sin and hell, but also to teach us the way to heaven. His teaching has been full and wide, showing the infinite love of God coming to help our weakness. He has to teach us a hard lesson, that we are to keep to a narrow road, deny ourselves, bear a burden and a yoke, the burden of a daily cross, and through many tribulations borne with a meek and humble heart to enter into His peace and joy and love. He spoke as never man spoke, making His meaning clear to the little and lowly though the proud and learned saw it not.

Our Example. — But besides speaking, He would show us how to do it. He, who could choose what family He would throughout all history to be born in, chose a workman's home, with poverty, hardship, and work for His life's lot. The suffering that we must bear for our sins He bore a hundred-fold, till all His saints who love Him have longed to share His privilege of suffering innocently. The holiness and innocence of His own life are so beautiful that all hearts are drawn to love holiness, and to wish to be innocent as He was.

Our Friend.—When He has told us what we must do to be children of God ; when He has shown us how to do it ; what more can we ask Him to do ? One thing more—to stay with us while we try to do His teaching. He is our Teacher, our Example ; will He also be our Friend, to see our daily falls and guide us, encourage us, help us ? That also He will do for us. 'I will not leave you orphans : behold I am with you all days.' In our prayer, and in the Blessed Sacrament, without noise of words, He gives light, comfort, strength, to all who come to Him in simplicity of heart.

Faith in the coming Redeemer was the True Religion from the beginning of the world.—As soon as Adam had fallen into sin, God gave a promise of the Redeemer to come, in a vague form. He said that a child of Eve should crush the head of the serpent, the devil who had led them to sin. Through the merits of the coming Redeemer, He gave grace to Adam and to all who followed to save their souls if they would. But quickly men fell into sin and lost the truth God had taught them ; till He destroyed them by the flood, and saved only Noe and his family to make a new beginning. And again, as men grew and filled the earth, they forgot God, and sinned. 'Whereas they knew God (St. Paul says), they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into

the likeness of the image of a corruptible man, and of fowls, and four-footed beasts, and things that creep.' Yet in many of their false religions, even those which remain now in savage tribes, they kept the memory of the promised Saviour, and of the Flood.

The Jewish Faith in Him.—When there were but few who still knew the true God, and what He had revealed, God chose out Abraham to keep this knowledge alive until the Saviour should come. He made with Abraham a bargain, a covenant, or testament : God on His side would make Abraham's children into a countless nation, as they have been ever since, the nation of the Jews ; and the coming Saviour should be a child of Abraham, a Jew. And, on the other side, Abraham and his children would keep the knowledge of God and the faith in the coming Saviour though all the rest of the world should forget it. 'You worship what you know not,' Our Lord said to the Samaritans : 'we worship what we know ; for salvation is of the Jews.' The Jews were thus a chosen people, chosen to keep the knowledge of the Saviour, and to be ready for Him when He should come. Their religion was for a time only, for the time of waiting, as Jacob said, till He come who is the desire of the eternal hills. 'Art thou He that art to come, or look we for another ?' When He came He would make

a world-wide Church, to last all time : a 'new and eternal testament,' He said, in words preserved by the Church in the Mass, though they are not all written in the Scripture.

The Jewish religion began with Abraham. After 400 years God gave to Moses the Jewish law. The weighty things in this law, Our Lord tells us, were judgment and mercy and faith. It was a preparation for the coming Catholic religion of Christ. It taught the broad outlines of moral life, which Our Lord did not destroy—not one jot—but perfected in the full Christian life. And its ceremonies and observances were pictures and foreshadowings of what was to come in Our Lord's life and in His Church.

Leading to the Catholic Faith.—The heart of the Jewish faith was this : God will send a Redeemer to save us. The heart of the Catholic faith is that God has sent the Redeemer, and He has died for us. Till the moment He died, the Jewish faith was still the true faith ; the Jewish temple was still the temple of God (Our Lord that very week drove the money-changers out of 'My Father's House') ; the Jewish High Priest was still the priest of God when, on Good Friday morning, he charged Our Lord to answer, and Our Lord obeyed. When He died the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom ; the Jewish Church changed into the Catholic Church.

All who are saved are saved by Christ's Death. —Though many are now in heaven who lived before the Redemption, in the Jewish Church or out of it, or before the Jewish Church was made; yet none of them were in heaven till Our Lord Himself in His human nature entered heaven. It was fitting that He, the Son of Man, who opened the chance of heaven to us all, should Himself be the first true man to enjoy the vision of the Divinity. So when He spoke of Lazarus and the rich man dying, He said the rich man was buried in hell, while Lazarus was borne by the angels, not yet into heaven, but to Abraham's bosom, to the place of rest which we call Limbo. In the old law, He commanded Moses to make statues of angels, but not of saints. This is natural, as there were no saints yet in heaven.

All these who are saved, are saved by Our Lord's death. St. John saw them in heaven, from every tribe and nation and tongue and people, singing to Our Lord—'Thou hast redeemed us in Thy blood.' On earth they might, in their ignorance, never have heard of Him, nor known why God helped them. At death they would learn that they had been using the graces of Calvary, and were saved by the death of God the Son, even though they lived thousands of years before His incarnation. Because His death was saving souls from the very beginning, St. John says

the Lamb was slain from the beginning of the world. And, in the last Gospel of the Mass, he tells us that Our Lord, the true Light, gives His light to every man that comes into the world.

Suggestions for Further Reading

For the Fall of Man, see *Catholic Belief*, Part 3, No. 3 (Burns, Oates & Washbourne); also *The Beginning and the End of Man*, by Knox (Catholic Truth Society).

CHAPTER VIII

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Authority to teach.—In the days of Christ there came two men to a village, offering to teach: saying, 'Peace be to you; do penance, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. If you do not receive our teaching, it will be worse for you than for Sodom or Gomorrah, the cities of sin that God burned with fire from heaven.' What is to be thought of these men? It is possible that God has sent them, as they say; that when you hear them you hear God; better look into it, lest you find that you are resisting God.

After His days, they used the same tone. We are God's ambassadors to you; God entreats you through us; we are His stewards, dispensers of His good gifts. If you will not hear us, your blood be on your own heads.

This was the Catholic Church speaking. And ever since, with the same voice, she has cried to the world—a voice of entreaty and of authority.

Given by God.—Who sent these men? Christ. And who is Christ? He is God. And do they live lives worthy of God's messengers? Most;

but not all ; and not always. Judas is among them. 'Have I not chosen you twelve ? and one of you is a devil. It were better for that man if he had never been born.' Yet he, too, was sent to teach the Kingdom of God, to baptize ; to him, too, Christ said 'He that heareth you heareth Me.'

To sinful men.—Then God is using sinful men to give His graces to other men ? Yes. In every nation God gives grace to every soul directly. But here He gathers men into a union, where, sinful though they be, they are to give His graces to each other, and receive them from each other. This union is His Church.

Christ the Head.—'I will build My Church.' He called unto Him whom He would. He made that twelve should be with Him, and that He might send them to preach. At first He and they were the Church : He the Head and they the members in one body ; He the Vine and they the branches ; He living in them and acting through them, as the tree lives in its branches, and the head acts through its members. They grew to be thousands, and then millions, and by now many thousands of millions have been in the Church. And all the millions of members are as nothing compared to the one Head, without whom they can do nothing, and in whom they can do all things. And if all nations should fall away from the Church, and leave but a remnant of twelve

poor fishermen, yet the Church would lose none of her majesty or authority, for all her authority is in and from Christ, her Head.

The Universal Church.—Who are allowed to join this Church? All men. And not merely allowed, but commanded to join it. How do they join it? By believing and being baptized, being born again of water and the Holy Ghost. As the atoms of our food are born into a new life when they become human flesh, and share in our work of seeing and feeling; so men are born into a new life when they are taken into God's Church and share in His work of giving grace and saving souls.

Mystical Body of Christ.—By His own words and bodily presence, Our Lord could give grace to those who saw Him in His lifetime, and save their souls. But how give His grace and teaching to all nations and in all ages? The way He chose was to make for Himself another body, a mystical body, a body of men that should grow and spread through the world; a body that should do His work because He Himself would dwell in it and act through it (as our bodies do the work of the head because the head is in the body and acts through it). This body of men He calls His Church. It is holy, because it is *His* body. We speak of the doings of the Church, but really they are His doings. He teaches in the Church, He baptizes in the Church, He suffers in the Church.

'Jesus baptized more than John (though Jesus did not baptize, but His disciples).' 'Saul, why persecutest thou Me?' (he was persecuting the Church).

The Church, therefore, is a body of men that Our Lord has united to Himself, in order that through it He may do for souls in all nations and all ages, what He did for those who heard and saw Him in the flesh.

Indefectible.—How if this body should die out? He is God, and He has chosen to make it undying: it is to teach 'all days, even to the consummation of the world.' 'Of His Kingdom there shall be no end,' said the angel to Our Lady.

Infallible.—How if it go wrong? He will not let it: 'The gates of hell shall not prevail against it. He that heareth you, heareth Me'—till the end of the world.

One.—How if it be divided against itself? The only division will be the falling off of dead branches from the vine, to be burnt; but the vine will not be divided; there will not be two vines; but one vine, and many dead branches. He Himself will hold the Church together in all ages, as He did in His lifetime; its oneness shall be as the Oneness of God. 'The glory that Thou hast given Me have I given to them, that they may be one, as We also are One. There shall be one fold, and One Shepherd.'

The Church's Work is the Work of God.—The Church is to do for men's souls all that Our Lord did in His life. Not for their bodies, by miraculous cures. When His saints work miracles in all ages, He Himself gives them this power direct and not through the Church. But for souls the Church does all that He did.

He taught with authority, and governed with authority. He forgave sinners. He helped by advice and by comfort. He ordained men to give His graces to others, to teach and govern others. He offered the sacrifice of Himself to atone for men's sins. All these things the Church does: teaches His teaching with His authority; governs with His authority; gives men His forgiveness, His advice, His comfort; ordains men to minister His graces; offers atonement for sins —not another sacrifice like to His, but His. And no wonder that all the work is the same, for the Doer is the same. 'Why marvel you at this, or why look you upon us as though by our power or holiness we did these things?' Some have said that God should do all these things Himself, and not through men. And some that He may send men to teach and to baptize, but not to forgive sins or offer sacrifice. They would make laws for God! But is there any of these works unfit for God to do? Did He not do them all in His lifetime? May He not choose His own way

of doing them now, through His Church? And if you look reverently into the way He has chosen, will you not find in it infinite wisdom and infinite love? and glorify God who gives such power to men?

The Holy Ghost is the Soul of the Church.—All that Our Lord does through His Church is said to be done through the Holy Ghost; just as the things He did in His own lifetime. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, He cast out devils by the Holy Ghost, He rejoiced in the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost came on Him in the visible form of a dove. He gave the apostles His commands through the Holy Ghost. So the Holy Ghost came on the Church in the visible form of tongues of fire. He abides with her, guides her into all truth, brings back to her mind all that Our Lord said. When the Church decides a question of truth, the Holy Ghost decides. This the Scriptures tell us; and this is why we speak of the Holy Ghost as the soul of the Church. Our Lord Himself is called the Head of the Church in the Scriptures, and we the members of His body; the life, the soul that dwells in Head and members and binds them together into one living body, is the Holy Ghost.[1]

[1] Because the Holy Ghost dwells in every soul that is in the state of grace (whether Catholic, heretic, or pagan), some Catholic writers say that all souls in a state of grace belong to 'the soul of the Church.' This has sometimes been misunderstood.

Because the Church is Our Lord's mystical body, filled with the Holy Ghost, it is called Holy, the Holy Catholic Church. And St. Paul calls the faithful the Saints ; and the union of the faithful, the Church itself, is called by another name, the Communion of Saints. For we can think of the Church in two ways : as uniting us to Our Lord, and so we are His Church ; and as uniting us to each other, and so we are the Communion of Saints. Dead Catholics, in Heaven or Purgatory, are still members of Christ's body, and so still in communion with us, chiefly by prayer.

The Clergy are 'Fathers.'—Our Lord made clear what authority He gave to the rulers of His Church. I give you such a kingship as My Father has given Me. Not like the kings of the earth, to be ministered to ; but, like a father in a family, to minister to those under you. And he who is over all the rest must serve all the rest. Like a good and wise steward whom the Lord sets over His household, to give them their food in due measure and due time.

So the priest is father to the souls in his parish, the Bishop is father in his diocese, and the Pope (Papa) is Father in the whole Church.

What food are they to minister to the household ? Teaching, Sacraments, Public Worship, Example. Teach them all I have commanded you ; when they hear you they hear Me—Forgive

sins, and they are forgiven ; bind, and I bind, loose and I loose—This is My Body, offered ; this is My Blood, shed for you ; do ye this. Can the blind lead the blind ? Your disciples will not be better than you ; at the best they will equal you.

Holy Orders.—In the Church in this world, men are to give to other men the graces of God. Since only God can give grace, only He can send anyone to give it or say how he is to give it. The graces given through the hands of men are Sacraments ; and we are arranged in different ranks or orders according to what Sacraments we are able to give. The laity can give (in case of need, without the priest's presence) two Sacraments—Baptism and Marriage. The priest can give three others—Confession, Holy Communion, and Extreme Unction. The Bishop can give all seven. The Bishop and the priest receive their special powers in the Sacrament of Holy Orders ; from a Bishop who already has these powers. He had them from another Bishop. And he from another. This chain of Bishops goes right back to the Apostles, who received these powers from Our Lord, and handed them on to whom they thought fit, and as they thought fit. To Bishops they gave all their powers, including the power of handing them on. To priests and deacons were given partial powers, to use but not to hand on.

In the same way, the Church is to offer in the

Mass Our Lord sacrificed on the Cross. Only He can give anyone power so to offer Him. He gave the Apostles this power, and they handed it on to all priests. This power of saying Mass is the chief part of a priest's 'orders.'

So every priest is at the end of a chain, an unbroken succession of Bishops who have handed down from one to another the power which Our Lord gave to the Apostles. This power of 'orders' is different from his 'mission.' He gets his orders from the Bishop who ordained him. He gets his mission from the Bishop who put him in charge of this group of people. He may change to another mission, or to none. But he can never change his orders.

Mission.—The Church's 'mission' means her being sent to shepherd all nations. This mission also comes from the Apostles down to every lawful Bishop and parish priest by an unbroken succession of pastors ('shepherds'). Each Pope is shepherd of the whole world, and he gives their mission to all the other pastors, Bishops and priests. And when he dies, these pastors elect the next Pope, and hand on to him the full mission that Our Lord gave to St. Peter.

The Pope's Jurisdiction.—The Church needs a supreme visible head for two purposes—for government and for teaching. For government of the Church which is to teach all nations, there

must be someone to say who is to teach here and who to be Bishop there. Often this could be arranged peacefully ; but in case of dispute it can only be settled by a supreme head, by whose decision the people can know that their priests and Bishops are truly sent by the Church. For this purpose Our Lord said to St. Peter, 'To thee I will give the keys of My kingdom ; shepherd My lambs and shepherd My sheep'—that is, be supreme shepherd over the whole flock.

Schism.—To resist this authority of St. Peter and the other Popes, and defy it by obeying priests or Bishops who defy it, is the sin of schism ('tearing asunder the Church'). It is easy to know such schisms, because every lawful Bishop rules 'by the favour of the Apostolic See' (the throne of St. Peter), and every lawful priest in a parish must be 'approved by the Bishop.' But sometimes men have defied the Pope by setting up another who claimed to be Pope ; and then it was not easy to know the true Pope. The Holy Ghost guided the Church out of these troubles in the end ; but it sometimes took a long time.

The Pope's Infallibility.—For teaching also a supreme head on earth is needed. Any priest or Bishop can go wrong ; they have been going wrong since St. Paul's time. When other priests hear of it they say, 'That is not Catholic teaching.' The dispute goes to the Bishop. If he goes wrong

the other Bishops resist him. The dispute goes to the Pope; and then he, as Head of the Church, is asked to say what the teaching of the Church really is ; that is, to say what God revealed about it if it is a matter of faith, or what is right in a matter of morals (doing right or wrong). For this purpose Our Lord said to St. Peter, 'I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not ; and do thou make strong thy brethren.' If the Pope answers, 'This is the Catholic teaching,' then God does not let him answer wrong. If he *could* err in such a case, the teaching that Our Lord gave would be lost, since we could never be sure what it was.

The Church is infallible, the Pope is infallible. Not with two separate infallibilities. If the body is to speak, it speaks through the head: it is the head's work to speak for the whole body. The Pope speaks for the Church ; *his* infallibility is the infallibility of the Church ; it belongs to the whole Church, and therefore naturally to him as Head of the whole Church.

Heresy.—If, when the Pope has spoken, any refuse to believe, they commit the sin of heresy ('believing what we choose'). They leave the Church (because no longer among the faithful) and form churches of their own, which in time split up and then die out. This is how all the other Christian bodies have been formed ; branches fallen from the Vine, breaking up and dying.

The True Church.—In God's Church,

What the whole Church does is done by the Holy Ghost.

What the priests and other ministers do is done by the power of God—forgiving sins, saying Mass, and the rest.

The Church has God's authority to teach the whole world, infallibly.

The individual Bishops and priests are sent by God to take charge of their flocks, as truly as Judas and Peter were sent by Him to teach in Galilee.

They can teach wrong, but if they do the Church promptly checks them, and they amend or else leave the Church.

Among False Churches.—In the churches that men make for themselves, they are bound to each other by their own choice, not by the Holy Ghost. They have no mission, no authority ; God has not sent them to shepherd anyone or teach anyone. If they were priests or Bishops before they left the Church, they are still priests or Bishops, and can truly say Mass and ordain other Bishops. They keep their ' orders,' but not their ' mission ' —the authority the Pope gave them over their flocks. This they lost as soon as they rebelled ; the Pope put another pastor in their place. So they cannot hear confessions anywhere, for they are not approved by the Bishop anywhere. Yet

when a Catholic is dying, and there is no other priest near, the Church approves of his asking even these heretical priests to hear his confession.

In their teaching they teach some error and some part of God's truth, some more and some less ; as much as they choose. If they keep a great part of the truth, innocent people easily come to think they are sent by God and believe their teaching ; and the more they believe, and live up to, the more good they do. All these false religions are sin, because they set up another church and reject God's Church. But, like all other sins, we cannot commit this sin unless we know we are committing it ; and most of these people do not know they are rejecting God's Church.

Marks of the True Church. Apostolic.—When they begin to doubt, and to look for God's Church, we give them four signs to look for. Our Lord's Church was the one the Apostles were in, and was to last unchanged from them to the end of the world. The Apostles taught it what to believe and what to do ; no one in it had mission nor orders unless from the Apostles. Can you find such a Church now ? Yes : the Catholic Church still has mission and orders from the Apostles ; she has handed down their teaching and traditions unchanged through all these ages. Traditions are practices, ways of doing things, which show what

you believe. Praying for the dead shows that you believe you can help them. Making priests who are not Bishops shows that you believe you can divide up the powers Our Lord gave to the Apostles, and give a man some but not all.

One.—In Our Lord's Church all obeyed one Head, and believed one faith ; all acknowledged the same sacraments and offered the same ' breaking of Bread.' The Catholic Church through all these ages has held the one same faith unchanged, with the same sacraments and sacrifice ; and has acknowledged the Bishop of Rome as her one head on earth.

Holy.—Our Lord's Church was holy, as He is Holy—condemning the slightest sin as unworthy of God's children ; helping men to live holy lives. The Catholic Church keeps His holy teaching. She can give everyone, child or old, saint or sinner, the helps he needs to become holy. And she has made countries and families innocent and good ; and has made thousands and thousands of saints.

Catholic.—Our Lord's Church was to be for everyone (universal, Catholic), all nations, in all days to the end of the world ; if anyone wanted to be saved, he must believe the Church and be baptized into it. The Catholic Church has been saying the same thing ever since, to all nations, in all ages ; if you want to escape the flood of

sin, come into the Ark that God has sent to save you.

Two of these marks are mentioned in the Apostles' Creed—the *Holy*, *Catholic* Church. Two more, later, in the Nicene Creed we say at Mass—the *One*, Holy, Catholic, *Apostolic* Church. And later still, another is added to show that the Church is known by her head, the Bishop of Rome—the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, *Roman* Church.

Some of the churches men have made may think they have one or other of these marks. But anyone who honestly tries to find Our Lord's Church among the hundreds of others, must see plainly that it is either the Church of Rome or none. And then he needs the light of Faith to know that the Church of Rome is the Church of God. For this he must pray.

Suggestions for Further Reading

The Marks of the Church are dealt with in *Catholic Belief*, pp. 108–164 (Burns, Oates & Washbourne); and in *Faith of our Fathers*, chaps. i. to xii. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne). On the Mystical Body of Christ, see Marmion, *Christ the Life of the Soul*, chap. v. (Sands); also Benson's *Religion of the Plain Man* (T. Fisher Unwin), and *Christ in the Church* (Longmans).

CHAPTER IX

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

The Real Presence.—At the Last Supper Our Lord said the first Mass. He took in His hands bread from the supper and gave it to His Apostles, saying, 'Take ye and eat ; this is My Body, given up for you.'

But they were looking at His Body as before, seated there, speaking to them. Was His Body in two places? Yes ; He was holding it in His own hands. He was truly present in both places: visibly, bodily, before their eyes ; and invisibly, bodily present in the Sacrament that He held in His hands. He said, 'This is My Body'—the same Body that spoke to them, filled with its Blood, united to its human Soul and to His Godhead. He held not His Body only, but Himself, God and Man. So every priest holds Him ; 'within a creature's hands The vast Creator.'

He was present not in two places only, but in many. For He broke That which He held, and gave to Peter—'This is My Body,' to Andrew—'This is My Body,' to James, John, each of the twelve. They received, not broken portions of

His Body, but Christ whole and entire ; hidden under the smallest particle as under the unbroken Host. And after they had thus received Him, He took from the supper table a cup of wine, wine with which water had been mingled, and said, 'This is the chalice of My Blood, shed for you.' Where His Blood is, there He is, body and blood, soul, Godhead ; hidden here under the look of wine, as there under the look of bread ; present in many places at once, present whole and entire in all parts of that Food whether divided or undivided, and in all parts of this Drink, divided or undivided.

That was the Blessed Sacrament, waiting to be received by the Apostles. As the Infants' Catechism says, the Blessed Sacrament is Jesus Christ, hidden under the look of bread or under the look of wine ; waiting to feed the bodies and the souls of men. Before they receive Him, He is really present, waiting. That is why we speak of the Real Presence of Our Lord in this Holy Sacrament.

Some do not understand what these words mean, because they are thinking of His Godhead only. 'We genuflect when we go into Church, because Our Lord is there.' A Protestant pointed to these words in a book and asked, Is He not everywhere? As God, yes ; but not as man. His human body and soul are not everywhere, but only where He chooses to go. When Martha said to her sister, 'The Master is here, and calls you,'

Mary might have answered, Is He not everywhere? But she rose and hurried to meet Him, bodily present as Man.

Others mistake in a different way. Our Lord sent disciples before Him to the villages where He Himself was going afterwards. At the first visit, the disciples were there in His Name; whoever received them received Him, because He was working through them. But if the people asked, And is He really now present in the village? the answer would be, Not yet; He speaks through us now, but next time He will come Himself. So now, in every baptism and other Sacrament, He works through His priest. But in this Holy Sacrament He comes Himself, and waits. This is His real presence.

Some ask, Does His bodily presence matter so much? Is not His Godhead all in all? His bodily presence matters so much that for its sake He became man, and for its sake He made this Sacrament, that when His visible presence ended He might still be with us at least under visible veils. In His form of God, men shrink from Him, try to hide their hearts from Him and forget Him. Emptying Himself and taking the form of a servant, He draws near to us singly, as we draw near to one another; and in His manhood wins our love for His Godhead, which is all in all.

Transubstantiation.—What He lifted from the table was bread. And when He spoke, anyone else, who did not know, would have said, That is bread. But He, who knew, said, This is My Body. A moment ago bread ; now, His Body. He had changed the one substance into the other, bread into His Body. He lifted wine ; but when He spoke, that substance too was changed, into His Blood. We have given a name to this changing of one substance into the other—transubstantiation. A wonderful change, to us ; but to God nothing is impossible or difficult. He, being God, could do this. But can anyone else ? He answered that question at once, by saying to His Apostles, Do this. What He had just done, they were commanded to do. He, God, who commanded them to do it, gave them also power to do it. By those words they were ordained priests and bishops, with power to say Mass as He had said it, and to ordain priests as He had ordained them.

The Accidents.—Think again of what He held in His hands or in the chalice. Anyone looking and not knowing would have said, Bread, and Wine. For the look of bread remained unchanged, the shape, the size ; the feel, the taste, the smell ; everything outward just as it had been. And so too with the appearances (' accidents ') of the wine : they all remained unchanged ; though within

them was neither bread nor wine, for these had been changed into the Most Holy Body and Blood. We can see that these outward appearances which remain are not exactly like the mere appearance which the angel took when he spoke to Zachary, or the form of a dove in which the Holy Ghost appeared over Our Lord. For this look and taste of bread are the look and taste of that piece of bread to which they naturally belonged; and when God removed the bread by changing it into His Body, He preserved the look and taste just as they were before. And all the qualities of bread and of wine are preserved in the Blessed Sacrament exactly as in unconsecrated bread and wine.

By these appearances we know how long His presence lasts. As long as they are unchanged so that anyone would say this is bread or wine, He remains. But when they change and one would say this is not bread but something else, He ceases to be there. For He has not given Himself to us under any other appearance than of bread or of wine. We give thanks for a quarter of an hour after Holy Communion because we think that the digestion destroys the appearance of bread in about that time.

The Sacrifice of the Mass.—Our Lord did not say simply, This is My Body, This is My Blood, but He added words to show that He was offering

then the sacrifice of Calvary which was to be made next day. He said, 'This is My Body, *that is given up for you*. This is My Blood of the New Testament, *shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins*.' It was not yet the moment when His Body was given to death and His Blood shed; yet in the Sacrament He gave them His Body and His Blood as they would be on the Cross. Not This is My Body now seated before you, This is My Blood now flowing in My veins; but This is My Body given for you to-morrow, this is My Blood shed for you to-morrow. So in every Mass, the time of the Mass does not matter: what is offered in the Mass is the offering that He made on the Cross, the offering of His own life in His death, the sacrifice of His Body and Blood for the sins of the world. He seems to have foreshown this when first telling the Jews about the Blessed Sacrament: 'the Bread which I will give is *My flesh for the life of the world*' (St. John vi. 51). So St. Paul afterwards wrote: 'As often as you shall eat this Bread and drink the chalice, you shall show [not the Last Supper, but] the death of the Lord.' For Our Lord's own Mass at the Last Supper showed not the supper but His death.

Since on Calvary was offered Sacrifice for each of us, it would seem right that each of us should have been there to join in the offering. But as

this could not be naturally, He has in the Mass supernaturally made Calvary to be present to us in all times and places where a priest can be had to offer it. The one Sacrifice that Our Lord made in His death He offered in the first Mass ; and He offers it in every Mass. The priest at His bidding does what He did on Maundy Thursday—makes that Sacrifice to be present here and now. The people and the priest join as John and the holy women under the Cross joined their wills with Our Lord's in offering His sacrifice to the Father. The Mass is one and the same sacrifice with that of the Cross.

The words that Our Lord spoke (and that the priest speaks) in making the sacrifice of the Mass are called the words of consecration. Consecrating means making something SACRED. In older English it was called sacring. By these words, bread and wine are made into the most sacred of all created things, Our Lord's human body and blood ; and into these at their noblest moment—when offered on the Cross. So the Church says to God in every Mass: 'Out of the gifts Thou hast given us, we offer Thee a Victim that is pure, is holy, is stainless ! the holy Bread of Life everlasting, and the chalice of our eternal Redemption.' There we see the meaning of sacrifice to God. Because He is Lord and Giver of all created things, we feel that we ought to pick

out the best of them all and get someone to offer it to Him, someone whom He has appointed to make such offerings to Him on behalf of all His people—a priest. For that is the meaning of priesthood—to be appointed by God to offer Him sacrifice. And He has appointed also the sacrifice they are to offer—the sacrifice of Our Lord on the Cross.

We have spoken first of the real Presence, and then of the sacrifice. But we can now see in full the real order of what Our Lord did.

He began with the sacrifice. In speaking the words, He changed the bread and wine into His sacrificed Body and Blood, and offered these to His Father. Then He was for a time really present in this Blessed Sacrament under the appearances of food, waiting to be received. Then the Apostles received Him in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. So in every Mass, at the words of consecration He is offered in sacrifice to the Father; then He remains present for a time in this sacrificed form; till He is received in Holy Communion, which completes the sacrifice.

We explain to little children: the Blessed Sacrament is Jesus Christ, hidden. The Mass is our offering Him to God the Father. Holy Communion is God's giving Him to us, to feed our souls.

Communion.—'Unless you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, you shall not

have life in you. He that eateth and drinketh hath life everlasting.' 'He that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh judgment to himself.'

The Apostles all received and ate, received and drank. To Peter, it was life ; to Judas, a judgment. What did Peter receive, and what did Judas receive? To understand this, we must think of the grace of this Sacrament. Its grace is to increase our love of God. The life of the soul is our love for God ; to feed that life is to increase our love. So that in this Sacrament, two persons who already love each other—God the Son and I—meet in an act of love which is as food for their love for each other. It is this feeding the soul's love that Our Lord pictures in the outward sign of the Sacrament. Outmost of all there are the appearances of bread and wine, enclosing the real Body and Blood of Our Lord. This pictures the fact that His Body and Blood are now food for our body. Then, this feeding our body with His own Flesh and Blood pictures His feeding our soul by giving Himself to it. This last is the inward grace ; the other two are the outward signs, by which He *pictures* the grace, and by which He *gives* the grace.

Peter received the outward appearances of bread and wine ; received the Body and Blood as food for his body ; received into his soul God

made Man, to feed his soul with love. Judas received the outward appearances ; received the Most Holy Body and Blood as food for his sinful body ; and no more. That was his sacrilege, by which he ate and drank a judgment. Like his kiss, an outward sign of love where there was no love ; so here he used the sacrament of love to draw his Lord to a soul that loved money more than God. 'It were better for that man if he had not been born.'

Proper dispositions.—Mass after supper, and at the same table, does not sound very reverent, and we might think the Apostles did not attend to the sacredness of it. But when we read the full story of that evening, we see that Our Lord prepared them thoroughly for their Holy Communion. They were with Him for hours, listening to His instructions, rebukes, and prayers. He told them that He Himself was longing to come to them in Holy Communion : 'With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you before I suffer.' After it He went on teaching them of their work, promising love between them, praying for them. They finished with a hymn before going out to the garden of His agony. So the Church has put in the Mass many prayers, before the Consecration and after the Communion.

Reverence.—Our Lord made no rules of reverence Himself, but left the Church to teach us to

be reverent. His only law is that we must already love Him (*i.e.*, be in a state of grace), for in this Sacrament the Beloved enters the soul of His loving child, to increase love. The Church has added the rule of bodily reverence, to be fasting from midnight, so that this Holy Food shall be the first food of the day. This rule the Church made and the Church can change. But the priest cannot change it. People who have broken their fast, by mistake, come to the priest as if he could let them receive Holy Communion. He can only say 'Wait till to-morrow and make no mistake then.'

The dying are allowed to receive Holy Communion after breaking their fast. And those invalids who for a month have been laid up and who show no sign of soon being able to fast may get the priest to bring them Holy Communion now and then after they have taken liquid food, but not solid. But they may not break their fast and then go to the Church to receive. It must always be left to the priest to *bring* the Holy Communion to those who are not fasting, so that he may see that the law is rightly kept.

Suggestions for Further Reading

See Vonier, *The Christian Mind*, chap. xvii. (Herder). Bishop Hedley treats the theology of the Blessed Sacrament fully in *The Holy Eucharist* (Westminster Library: Longmans).

CHAPTER X

THE RESURRECTION

Christ's Resurrection.—Some days before Our Lord died, there came to Him the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection ; and answering them He said, 'You do greatly err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.' Not knowing the power of God, and thinking that even God could not raise the dead ; not knowing the Scriptures in which He teaches that He will raise them. God has made our body and soul from nothing, and united them into a living man. To us this is wonderful ; to God it is easy. It is just as easy and just as wonderful after death to re-unite body and soul into a living man.

Our Lord told His Apostles plainly and often of His own resurrection: that He was to be delivered to the Gentiles and crucified, and the third day to rise again (though they did not understand till they actually saw Him dead and risen again). To the rest He spoke in parables. When His enemies asked for some sign to prove that He really was sent by God as He said, He told them the only sign they would get was His resurrection

—the sign of Jonas the prophet. 'As Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so shall the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth.' And another time He used the parable of calling His body a temple : 'Destroy this temple and in three days I will build it up again.' When He was dead they understood that He had promised to rise again after three days, and therefore they guarded the tomb with soldiers.

'He was crucified, dead, and buried : He descended into hell.' These words tell us of the separation of body from soul in death. *He* was buried—*He*, His body. *He* descended into hell —*He*, His soul. 'He rose again' tells us that His soul returned to His body, and the body was again alive. 'I was dead, and behold I am living for ever and ever,' He said to St. John in the Apocalypse.

His Glorified Body.—When the Apostles heard He was risen they thought it an idle tale. When they saw Him again, they thought Him a spirit only. But He said No : 'See My hands and feet, handle and see : a spirit has not bones and flesh as you see I have. Have you anything to eat ? And He ate before them.' He was living, not in some new body, but in the same body that died ; bearing still the place of the nails and the spear. But though it was, and is, the same body, yet it is changed. 'We shall be changed,' says St. Paul:

'for this corruptible must don incorruption, and this mortal don immortality.' He will not suffer nor die again : 'Behold, I am living for ever and ever.' And there are other changes, which make us see why St. Paul should say, 'It is sown a natural body, it rises a spiritual body.' Our Lord in His risen body moves as freely as do our thoughts. Doors and bolts cannot hinder our thoughts entering any place we choose to think of. And distance does not delay our thoughts : we can think of the far-off sun as instantly as of our own hand. Our Lord's risen body moves as freely. Doors were shut where the Apostles were gathered ; yet He suddenly stood in the midst of them. Also when He had said all He wished, He vanished from their sight and instantly was somewhere else, wherever He wished to be. In these two ways His body seems like a spirit, or like an angel appearing ; yet it is the same body that was crucified.

In the Blessed Sacrament, too, St. Thomas points out that His body is present like spiritual things are present. Like knowledge. When I know something, I can give you the same knowledge, give it to thousands ; and we all have the whole of it. Giving it to you does not take it from me. So do we each receive Christ whole and entire ; undivided, though millions receive Him. I can give you the knowledge by speaking,

or by writing ; and either way you receive the same knowledge ; and they who both hear it and read, learn no more than one who only reads it. So is Christ received under either appearance, of bread or of wine ; and the priest receiving both receives no more than the child who receives one. My speech may be broken, my writing torn ; yet these things do not hurt the knowledge I give you. So the Sacred Host is broken outwardly, and He is untouched by the breaking ; as though His body were a spirit ; yet it is the same body that was crucified.

He showed the glory of His body to St. John ; not during the forty days, but later (He had shown it before His death to Peter, James, John, in His transfiguration). 'His head and hair were white as white wool and as snow ; His eyes as the flame of fire ; His feet like to molten brass, as in a burning furnace.' In some books Latin names are used for these qualities of His glorified body : impassibility, meaning that He cannot suffer ; agility, that He goes where He will, quick as thought ; subtlety, that walls and doors cannot hinder Him ; splendour, the brightness of His glory.

The Forty Days.—It is important to read carefully all that is written about the time between Easter and Ascension Day in the Gospels and in the Acts of the Apostles. Our Lord did not

appear once or twice and leave the Apostles wondering had they seen a vision or fancied they saw Him ; but He came to them constantly for forty days. 'He showed Himself alive after His passion, by many proofs, for forty days ; appearing to them and speaking of the Kingdom of God and eating with them.' He had left much teaching to be done in these forty days, because till they understood His death and resurrection they could not take it in. On Maundy Thursday He had said, 'I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. I will see you again.' So now He opened their understandings that they might understand the Scriptures ; beginning at Moses He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things that concern Him. Hence when they wrote the Gospels they could quote the prophecies that foretold His work and sufferings and His resurrection. In these days He taught them that by the power of the Holy Ghost they were to forgive sins ; that before they could begin their Apostolic work they needed to be endued with further strength from on high, to be baptized with the Holy Ghost on Whit-Sunday ; that His Kingdom was not limited to Israel, but must take in all nations, to the ends of the earth ; that Peter was to shepherd all this flock, lambs and sheep alike, as Vicar for his Master. And many other teachings are written that He gave in the forty

days, as well as much personal talk with His Apostles. Yet this is only part ; for we are not told what He said to Peter when first He saw him after Peter denied Him ; nor to James, who also saw Him alone ; nor to the 500 who saw Him all at once ; nor many other times.

Now, after the Apostles had thus seen Him, touched Him, talked with Him, eaten with Him for forty days, and had seen Him rise towards the sky till a cloud hid Him, we can understand how foolish it would sound to them when men suggested that they had only dreamed or fancied they saw Him, and in their excitement had mistaken the fancy for truth. They had been blamed for needing so much proof : 'Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed.' They had seen, not once, but constantly for forty days; singly, in groups, in crowds ; they had learned many things they never knew before. It was foolish to ask them to believe they had all been dreaming.

To the Apostles themselves it must have been wonderful when, later on, St. Paul came to them to compare his teaching with theirs, and they found that Our Lord had taught Him face to face all the Gospel ; and he knew Our Lord's life and teaching as if he had been one of themselves listening and learning all the three years. 'He was seen by Cephas ; and after that by the

eleven. Then was He seen by more than five hundred brethren at once, of whom many remain until this present, and some are asleep. After that He was seen by James; then by all the Apostles. And last of all He was seen also by me, as one born out of due time.' His resurrection is the crowning proof that He is God made man. Were He not man, He could not die. Were He not God, He could not Himself rise again.

Our Resurrection.—'I believe in the resurrection of the body.' Our Lord tells us that we too are to rise from the dead at the last day. 'All that are in the graves shall hear His voice; and they that have done good things shall come forth into the resurrection of life; but they that have done evil things into the resurrection of judgment.' 'He shall send His angels with a trumpet and a great voice, and they shall gather His elect from the four winds.' And St. John in his vision saw the sea give up the dead that were in it.

We are to live for ever as men, body and soul; not as the saints now in heaven, spirits without bodies. This Our Lord made clear in answering the Sadducees, who said there is no resurrection. 'Have you not read in the book of Moses: I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob? Not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. To Him, all live.' We might think this means

only that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob still live in their souls ; but does it mean that their bodies will rise ? Our Lord says Yes. 'But that the dead rise again Moses also showed when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham.' Because the soul lives, the body must rise again. But not yet ; for He also says, 'When they shall rise again from the dead. . . .' That will be at the last day.

In the Same Body.—To some there is a difficulty in saying that we shall rise with the same body that we now have. Our Lord rose with the same body that was crucified : His soul returned to it and made it alive. But His body did not 'see corruption,' as David said, for it was dead only part of three days ; whereas ours corrupt in the grave and feed worms or plants.

We must think what we mean by 'the same body.' We have the same body now that we have had all our lives ; but it is not built of the same stuff. A living body is always being rebuilt out of new matter and losing the old matter ; as a river is the same river though made of new water each day. So when we say you will die in the same body you now have, we are not thinking of the stuff of which it is now made—*that* may all be gone long before you die ; but that it will be *your* body, which fits your soul and keeps all the scars and habits and experiences of your life. So

in the resurrection it is nothing to Almighty God to rebuild our bones or dust into this same body, though most of the matter in it may be new.

In heaven our risen bodies will share the glory of Our Lord's risen body. He says, 'Then shall the just shine like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father.' 'God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and death shall be no more, nor mourning nor crying, neither shall there be sorrow any more.' Like Him, they shall be bright, and safe from suffering, and unhindered by distance, or by doors and walls. And 'they that shall be accounted worthy of that world, and of the resurrection from the dead, shall neither be married nor take wives. Neither can they die any more: for they are equal to the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.'

But though we shall all rise again, we shall not all be changed. 'They that have done evil things shall come forth into the resurrection of judgment.' Of their judgment Our Lord says terrible things. These shall go into punishment everlasting. They shall say to the mountains Fall upon us, and to the hills Cover us. Their punishment is hell, the fire unquenchable, which was prepared for the devil and his angels; outer darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth; where their worm dieth not, and their fire quencheth not. 'Thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime;

and now thou art tormented in this flame.' It is no use trying to think comfortably about hell. Our Lord said about Judas, 'It were good for that man if he had never been born.' The only comfort is in knowing that no one goes there but by his own choice. God has prepared for us heaven, 'the Kingdom which was prepared for you before the foundation of the world.' It is our own folly if we refuse it and depart to the 'everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels.'

Suggestions for Further Reading

Blackfriars, May 1922, contains an article on 'Resurrection,' by V. McNabb.

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